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ABSTRACT

This book was prepared to enable schools to incorporate material on the Caribbean into existing curricula. Four aims guided the editors in their selection and presentation of materials: (1) to show Caribbean history and contemporary realities through the eyes of ordinary people, both real and fictional; (2) to promote critical thinking rather than simply the memorization of information; (3) to stimulate students' interest by creatively combining different types of learning materials; and (4) to ensure the authenticity and relevance of the material. The book spans the 450 years from colonization of the Caribbean to the mid-twentieth century when most Caribbean territories gained their independence. Each unit includes a teacher guide, an introduction providing background information, and one or more readings. The book is divided into four parts with several readings in each section. Parts include: (1) "The First Caribbean Peoples"; (2) "Conquest and Colonial Rule"; (3) "Winning Freedom"; and (4) "Building New Nations." Contains references, a list of sources of classroom materials, and an order form. (EH)

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Caribbean Connections

ED 404 256

Classroom Resources for Secondary Schools

Overview of REGIONAL HISTORY

SO 026 596

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Caribbean Connections

Classroom Resources for Secondary Schools

Overview of

Regional History

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Introduction

A RETIRED COUPLE FROM OHIO taps their meager savings for a three-day cruise to the Bahamas. Shirts sold in a Dallas department store carry labels saying "Made in the Dominican Republic." Grocery stores a mile from the White House stock hard-dough bread, coconut tarts and ginger beer for the community of 30,000 Jamaicans living in and around Washington, DC.

The Caribbean, along with Mexico, is the Third World region closest to the United States. Its history is intertwined with ours in a multitude of ways. Thousands of North Americans visit the islands each year as tourists, and persons of Caribbean origin make up one of the largest immigrant groups in the United States and Canada. Extensive aid, trade and investment link the U.S. to the Caribbean economically. And the United States has intervened repeatedly in the region to influence political change.

Despite these close links, most North Americans know little about Caribbean societies. The region is often depicted as a vacation playground—a paradise of "sun, sea and sand" for the enjoyment of tourists, but not a place where real people live and work. Political and cultural developments in the region often go unreported in the U.S. media. When the Caribbean is discussed, racial and political stereotypes often blur the images.

As a result, many North Americans have missed the opportunity to know the proud history and rich cultural traditions of this neighboring region. Caribbean people have overcome many obstacles and realized outstanding achievements in political, economic and cultural life. The mingling of diverse peoples has produced vibrant cultures, which have enriched U.S. and Canadian societies through the migration of Caribbean people north.

Until recently, most secondary school curricula in the United States included little information on the Caribbean. Textbooks often mention the region in passing during discussion of Latin America. There are few secondary-level resources widely available in the U.S. which are up-to-date, historically and culturally accurate, and which view Caribbean realities through Caribbean eyes.

This book was prepared to enable schools to begin incorporating material on the Caribbean into existing curricula. It is not a substitute for developing a complete curriculum on the Caribbean, a project which remains to be done. It is hoped that it will help spark interest in teaching and learning about the Caribbean, which will lead to the development of more comprehensive teaching resources.

▼ Objectives and Methods

Four aims guided the editors in their selection and presentation of materials:

- To show Caribbean history and contemporary realities through the eyes of ordinary people, both real and fictional. Oral histories, interviews and other first-person testimonies provide a people-centered view of Caribbean life. An example is the autobiographical narrative in Unit 5, in which an Antiguan man recounts his family's experience building a "free village" after the end of slavery.

- To promote critical thinking rather than simply the memorization of information. All writing contains a point of view, which may be stated or implied. If students examine values and unstated assumptions in whatever they read,

they become active participants in their own learning. Where a topic may be controversial—for example in Unit 9, on gunboat diplomacy—we have aimed for a diversity of views. Students are asked to weigh the evidence, and perhaps to do further research, before drawing their own conclusions.

• To stimulate students' interest by creatively combining different types of materials, such as short stories, novel excerpts, non-fiction essays, interviews, newspaper articles, songs, poetry and drama. Unit 10 on the Cuban revolution, for instance, includes a non-fiction essay, autobiographical narratives by Cuban women, and poetry by Cuban poets.

• To ensure the authenticity and relevance of the material. We sought suggestions from Caribbean individuals and organizations in the Caribbean, the U.S. and Canada, and relied on an advisory council of scholars for ongoing review. There are hundreds of Caribbean civic organizations, and many academics and teachers of Caribbean origin, in North America; they can serve as a primary resource for developing programs of study on the region.

▼ How to Use These Materials

This book is the first of six in the Caribbean Connections series. Books two through five are country profiles of Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Haiti, and Trinidad & Tobago. The last book in the sequence focuses on migration and Caribbean communities in North America.

The present volume provides a foundation for the series. Beginning with the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean, it spans the 450 years from colonization to the mid-twentieth century, when most Caribbean territories gained their independence. Recent developments of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s are dealt with in the country profiles, and so are merely touched on here. Instructors may wish to begin with this regional history, then proceed to one or more of the country-specific books.

The content is aimed principally at grades nine through twelve, but may be adapted for use at higher and lower levels. The readings, discussion questions and suggested activities are intentionally varied in their level of difficulty. The instructor is encouraged to select those parts for which the content and level are compatible with curricula in use.

Each unit in this book includes a teacher guide, an introduction providing background information, and one or more readings. The teacher guides include objectives, discussion questions and suggested activities. The introductions and the readings are intended as student handouts.

Each teacher guide suggests resources related to the unit, and an appendix suggests sources for further study. Although varied in difficulty, these tend to be at a higher reading level than the texts included in this book. They will be particularly appropriate for assigning special research projects to individual students or small groups. Addresses for publishers and distributors are included in an appendix.

It is important to note that the Caribbean Connections series is not a curriculum, that is, a self-contained program of study. It does not attempt to provide a complete introduction to the Caribbean or to individual Caribbean countries. It presents, instead, materials which can supplement curricula in areas such as Social Studies, English, Third World literature, African-American or Latin American history, Spanish, Multicultural Studies or Global Education. If an instructor wants to devote a full unit of study to the Caribbean or to a certain country, we recommend that s/he use the books in conjunction with other materials.

The secondary social studies curriculum of most school districts does not devote significant time directly to the Caribbean. However, this should not discourage teachers from using these materials. There are many opportu-

nities to address the region within the scope and sequence of traditional social studies and language arts curricula.

The major ways of integrating the Caribbean are through the study of (a) United States history, (b) social studies themes, (c) current events, and (d) language arts. Many of the lessons could be introduced as students are studying the history of the United States or the Western Hemisphere. For example, the readings in Units 3 and 4 on slavery and resistance can provide useful comparisons to that era of U.S. history. Unit 9, *Gunboat Diplomacy*, addresses a pivotal period in U.S. foreign relations and Latin American history. Unit 1, *The Arawaks and the Caribs*, could be integrated into study of Native American history.

The Caribbean can illustrate many required social studies themes and issues. For example, the readings on the Cuban revolution can be used in studies of economic development. The book also lends itself to cross-disciplinary studies, such as social studies and art, or English and Spanish. Units 3, 8 and 10 include poems in the original Spanish, along with English translations.

The present series of books is a first edition and will be revised based on feedback received. The editors would be pleased to hear from instructors and students who have used the materials. We want to know how the materials are being used, which parts have proved most effective in the classroom and which need improvement. Contact: Caribbean Connections, P.O. Box 43509, Washington, DC 20010 (202) 429-0137.

▼ Acknowledgements

Developing this resource involved many people, and was largely a labor of love. We are grateful to the Council of Caribbean Organizations of the Greater Baltimore and Washington Metropolitan Areas for their assistance throughout the project. For meticulous reviews of the material, we thank Ana Vásquez, coordinator of the Center for Excellence in Languages at Bell Multicultural High School in Washington, DC, and Jeffrey Benson, director of New Perspectives School in Brookline, Massachusetts. Professor Keith Warner of George Mason University, Professor Constance Sutton of New York University, George Jacobs of the University of Hawaii, and William Bigelow of the Portland Public Schools advised on portions of the manuscript. Erland Zygmuntowicz assisted in developing the lesson plans.

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BERMUDA
Hamilton
Col. U.K.
Crown Colony
Pop. 72,000

BAHAMAS
Nassau
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1973
Pop. 241,000

CUBA
Havana
Col. Spain
Ind. 1898
Pop. 9.8 million

CAYMAN ISLANDS
Georgetown
Col. U.K.
Crown Colony
Pop. 20,000

JAMAICA
Kingston
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1962
Pop. 2.2 million

BELIZE
Belmopan
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1981
Pop. 152,000

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES
1. Curaçao
2. Aruba
3. Bonaire
4. St. Maarten
5. Saba
6. St. Eustatius
Willemstad
Col. Holland
Self-governing colony
Pop. 260,000

FRENCH GUIANA
Cayenne
Col. France
French overseas department
Pop. 77,000

SURINAME
Paramaribo
Col. Holland
Ind. 1975
Pop. 376,000

GUYANA
Georgetown
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1966
Pop. 700,000

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
Port-of-Spain
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1962
Pop. 1.1 million

GRENADA
St. George's
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1974
Pop. 110,000

BARBADOS
Bridgetown
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1966
Pop. 256,000

ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
Kingstown
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1979
Pop. 123,000

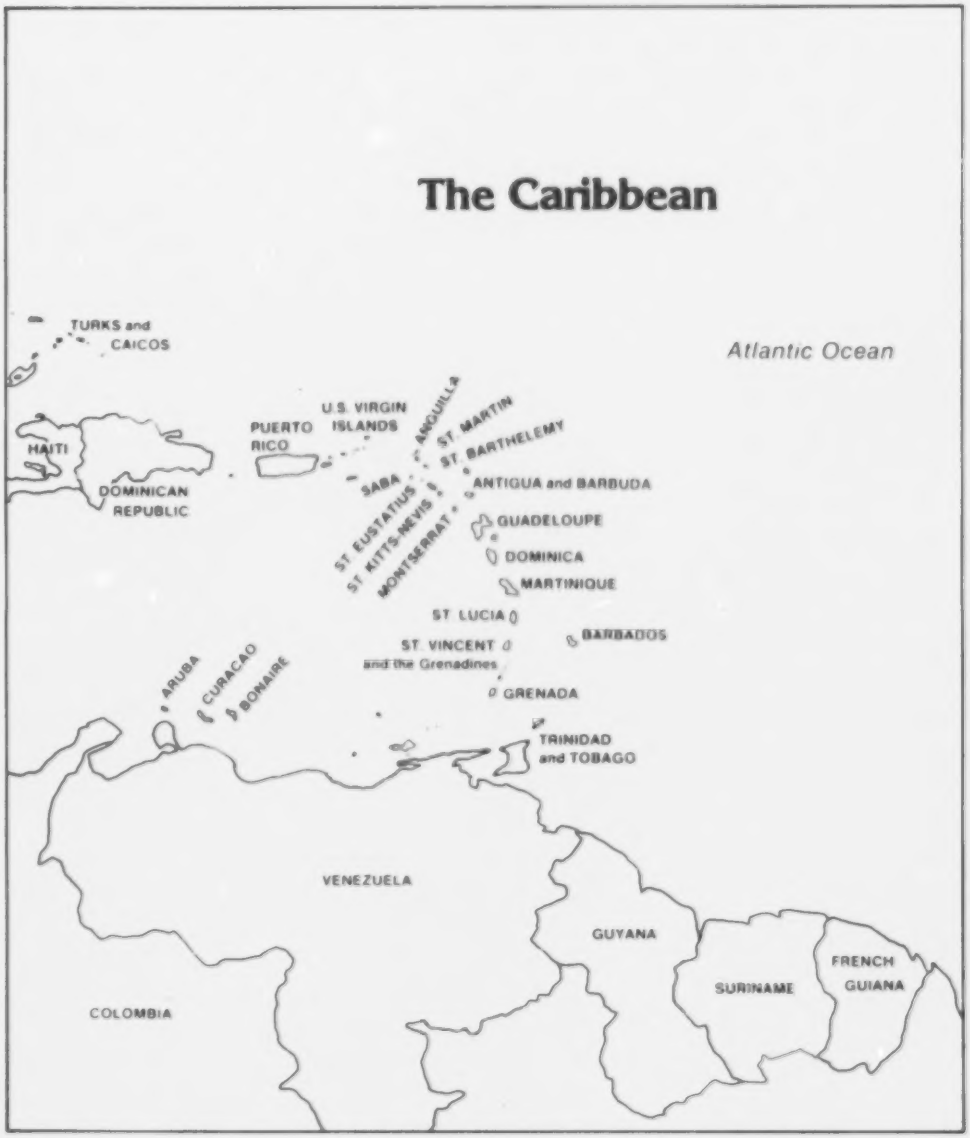
TURKS & CAICOS
Grand Turk
Col. U.K.
Crown Colony
Pop. 8,000

HAITI
Port-au-Prince
Col. France
Ind. 1804
Pop. 5.2 million

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Santo Domingo
Col. Spain
Ind. 1844
Pop. 6.3 million

PUERTO RICO
San Juan
Col. Spain/U.S.
U.S. possession
Pop. 3.2 million

BRITISH VIRGIN IS.
Road Town
Col. U.K.
British dependency
Pop. 13,000



U.S. VIRGIN IS.
1. St. Thomas
2. St. Croix
3. St. John
Charlotte Amalie
Col. U.S.
U.S. territory
Pop. 103,000

ANGUILLA
The Valley
Col. U.K.
British dependency
Pop. 7,000

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA
St. John
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1981
Pop. 77,000

ST. KITTS/NEVIS
Basseterre
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1983
Pop. 45,000

ST. LUCIA
Castries
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1979
Pop. 119,000

MARTINIQUE
Fort-de-France
Col. France
French oversea department
Pop. 303,000

DOMINICA
Roseau
Col. U.K.
Ind. 1978
Pop. 74,000

GUADELOUPE
Basseterre
Col. France
French overseas department
Pop. 328,000

MONTSERRAT
Plymouth
Col. U.K.
Crown Colony
Pop. 12,000

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Map Exercises

ACTIVITY 1: FIND THESE COUNTRIES

Instructor: For this exercise, white-out the names of the following countries on the master map. Make a photocopy of the altered map for each student. Break the class into small groups. The groups will use the clues to fill in the names of the missing countries on their maps. They will think of another fact they know about each country and write it in the space provided. (If they do not know, encourage them to guess.) Afterwards, go over each set of clues with the class, asking a student to point out the correct country on a large wall map.

1. **The Dominican Republic** is a Spanish-speaking country. It shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti.
Something else we know about the Dominican Republic: _____

2. **Barbados** is an English-speaking country. It is the easternmost island in the Caribbean Sea.
Something else we know about Barbados: _____

3. **Trinidad and Tobago** is a twin-island state. It is off the coast of Venezuela at the southern tip of the Caribbean archipelago.
Something else we know about Trinidad and Tobago: _____

4. **Guyana** is an English-speaking country on the South American mainland. It shares a border with Venezuela.
Something else we know about Guyana: _____

5. **Belize** is an English-speaking country located in Central America. It shares borders with Guatemala and Mexico.
Something else we know about Belize: _____

6. **Dominica** is an English-speaking country. It is located between the French territories of Guadeloupe and Martinique.
Something else we know about Dominica: _____

7. **Curaçao** is a Dutch colony. It is off the coast of Venezuela between Aruba and Bonaire.
Something else we know about Curaçao: _____

ACTIVITY 2: WHO AM I?

Instructor: Photocopy the worksheet below for each student. Students will retain their maps from the preceding activity. Break the class into small groups. Each group will fill in the country names on the worksheet and add their own "clues." Afterwards, go over each set of clues with the class, asking a student to point out the correct country on a large wall map.

1. I am an archipelago of many small islands.
I am close to Florida.
My capital is Nassau.

I am _____

Our own clue: _____

2. I am south of St. Vincent.
I produce nutmeg.
The United States invaded me in 1983.

I am _____

Our own clue: _____

3. I am one of three Spanish-speaking Caribbean nations.
I am near the U.S. Virgin Islands.
I am a United States "Commonwealth."

I am _____

Our own clue: _____

4. I am the largest island in the Caribbean.
My capital is Havana.
I produce sugar.

I am _____

Our own clue: _____

5. I was colonized by France.
I had a successful slave revolution in 1795.
I share an island with the Dominican Republic.

I am _____

Our own clue: _____

6. I am an island south of Cuba.
I produce bauxite.
I am the birthplace of reggae music.

I am _____

Our own clue: _____

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Chronology

Before A.D. 1500

- Arawaks and Caribs settle Caribbean islands, create societies based on agriculture, hunting, fishing
- 1492-1503 Columbus leads colonizing voyages

16th century

- Spain colonizes Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Jamaica and Trinidad
- Arawaks revolt against forced labor

17th century

- Subsistance farming and livestock raising in Spanish colonies
- England and France battle Caribs for control of the Lesser Antilles
- Dutch traders supply slaves to the Spanish, English and French colonies for growing sugar cane
- 1655 England captures Jamaica from Spain
- 1697 Hispaniola partitioned into St. Domingue (France) and Santo Domingo (Spain)

18th century

- France and England at war; Caribbean possessions change ownership in treaty settlements
- Sugar plantation industry reaches its height in English and French colonies
- Millions of captives transported from Africa in the Triangular Trade; many slave and Maroon revolts
- 1791-1802 Slave revolution in St. Dominigue
- 1797 England captures Trinidad from Spain

19th century

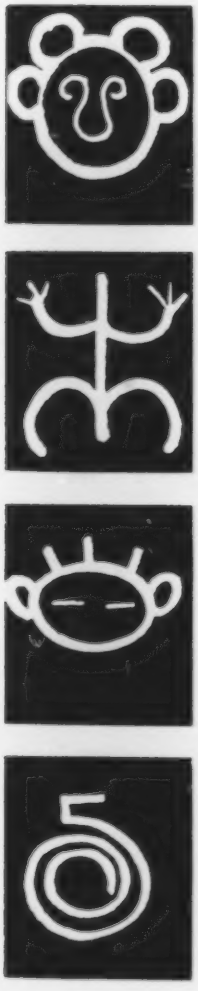
- 1804 St. Domingue becomes independent Haiti
- Sugar production surges in Cuba
- 1838 Abolition of slavery in the British colonies
- Immigration of contract laborers from India
- 1844 Dominican Republic gains independence
- 1848 Abolition in French colonies
- 1863 Abolition in Dutch colonies and the U.S.
- Puerto Ricans and Cubans fight for abolition and independence from Spanish rule
- 1898 Spanish-Cuban-American War: U.S. occupies Cuba and Puerto Rico

20th century

- 1915-1934 U.S. occupies Haiti
- 1916-1924 U.S. occupies Dominican Republic
- 1917 U.S. buys Virgin Islands from Denmark
- 1930s Workers protest in British colonies
- 1940 U.S. gets naval bases in British colonies
- 1940s Constitutional changes prepare British colonies for independence
- 1952 Puerto Rico becomes U.S. "Commonwealth"
- 1950s Caribbean economies diversify into mining, manufacturing, tourism
- 1958-1962 Federation of the West Indies
- 1959 Cuban revolution
- 1961 U.S. invades Cuba at Bay of Pigs
- 1960s Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados and Guyana gain independence
- 1965 U.S. invades Dominican Republic
- 1970s-1980s Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica, Antigua, and St. Kitts-Nevis gain independence
- 1973 Caribbean Community (CARICOM) formed
- 1983 U.S. invades Grenada

PART ONE

THE FIRST CARIBBEAN PEOPLES



The Caribbean region includes more than two dozen territories in and around the Caribbean Sea. Its people trace their roots to Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. As a result of these diverse influences, the languages, races and cultures of the Caribbean form a rich and varied tapestry.

This diversity, however, is recent. For many centuries, Native Americans were the sole inhabitants of the region. The Ciboneys, Arawaks and Caribs built flourishing communities based on agriculture and fishing. Through archaeological studies and written accounts, scholars have learned about the lives of these first Caribbean peoples.

The Arawaks made petroglyphs (written symbols) to represent gods and animals. These petroglyphs were carved into rocks and cave walls in Puerto Rico.

UNIT I: The Arawaks and the Caribs

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Explain the origins and migration routes of the Caribbean's first inhabitants
2. Describe social, religious and economic practices of the Arawaks and Caribs

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do places get names? Give some examples you know of. How do you think the Caribbean got its name?
2. Where did the Arawaks and Caribs live originally? Trace their migration path into the Caribbean on a map. Which of the islands did they settle?
3. How did the Arawaks and Caribs get food? Which foods were the basis of their diet? Which crops did they bring to the Caribbean from South America?
4. Why were canoes important to the native peoples? How might Caribbean history have been different if the Arawaks and Caribs had **not** known how to make canoes?
5. Which celebration in your community reminds you of an areyto? In what ways are they similar?
6. Does the Arawak ball game resemble any sport or game you have played?
7. What are some ways that Arawak and Carib culture might have influenced modern societies?
8. What similarities and differences do you see between the Arawaks and Caribs and the Native Americans of the United States?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Review with the class the history of the Arawak and Carib migration to the Caribbean. Using a large wall map, have students locate the Orinoco River basin in South America, then trace the Arawak/Carib migrations north. Review which islands were settled by the Arawaks and which by the Caribs.

   Give each student a photocopy of the map on pp.10-11. Referring to a wall map or atlas for help, students will:

   a) Draw and label the Orinoco River.

b) Label the islands with their original names:

Guanahani (San Salvador, Bahamas)
Cubanacán (Cuba)
Quisqueya (Dominican Republic)
Ayiti (Haiti)
Borinquen (Puerto Rico)
Xaymaca (Jamaica)
Liamuiga (St. Kitts)
Alliouagana (Montserrat)
Ayay (Guadeloupe)
Ouaitoucoubouli (Dominica)
Madinina (Martinique)
Hewanorra (St. Lucia)
Youlou (St. Vincent)
Camerhogue (Grenada)
Iere (Trinidad)
Tavaco (Tobago)

c) Choose a color to represent the Arawaks and a different color for the Caribs. Draw lines in the colors to show the migration routes of the two groups from the Orinoco into the Caribbean.

d) Using the same colors, color each island to show which people lived there at the time of the European arrival.

2. Obtain fragments of several common objects, such as a spoon, shoe, or telephone. Hold each fragment up in front of the class. Ask students to imagine that they are achaeologists who have uncovered this object in the earth. Ask them to suggest various purposes it could have been used for. How would they know which was the correct use?

Next, ask students to name two ways scholars have learned about Arawak and Carib cultures. Make two columns on the chalkboard, one titled "archaeological studies" and the other, "Europeans' written accounts." Ask students to think about how each type of evidence can provide information about different aspects of the native peoples' cultures. Under each heading, students will list examples of information that this type of evidence could provide, and the reasons why.

Example:

Archaeological studies

tools the Arawaks used (fragments of stone and shell tools would be found in the earth)

Europeans' written accounts

clothes the Arawaks wore (material for clothing—plant fibers or

animal skins—could not have survived centuries, so we must rely on human observation).

Finally, ask students to think about how each type of evidence might sometimes lead researchers to **false** conclusions. Discuss the possibility that outsiders would interpret what they observed in light of their own cultures and values. Emphasize the importance of critically evaluating sources of historical information to estimate their accuracy.

3. Students draw a picture or make a model in another medium (such as paper cutouts) showing an Arawak areyto or ball game.

4. The class makes a display entitled "Caribbean Foods: Then and Now." Divide the class into pairs. Each pair will gather information about one of the foods the Arawaks and Caribs ate (cassava, corn, sweet potatoes, arrowroot, yams, yautía, beans, peanuts, cocoa, tomatoes, pineapples, meat, seafood). Questions to consider: Where did the food come from originally? How does it grow? How do you think the Arawaks and Caribs prepared and ate the food? How is it prepared and eaten today? Each pair of students will write up and submit their findings, along with pictures of the food if possible.

Next, accompany a small group of students to a local grocery store. Purchase a sample of each of the foods.

Cook and eat the foods. Students whose families are from the Caribbean can share recipes and supervise the preparation of typical dishes. The class can also create a display using the foods, written descriptions and pictures, for the classroom or school common area.

▶ RESOURCES

1. Sources on the history and culture of the Arawaks:

   • Ricardo E. Alegría, *Discovery, Conquest, and Colonization of Puerto Rico*, 1493-1599 (San Juan: Colección de Estudios Puertorriqueños, 1971).

   • Ricardo E. Alegría, *History of the Indians of Puerto Rico* (San Juan: Colección de Estudios Puertorriqueños, 1974). Describes Arawak society, including family and community life, government, religion, agriculture and recreation. For grades 4 and up.

2. The filmstrip *Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes* explores the history and myths surrounding Native Americans in the United States. Available from Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Broadway, Suite 608, New York, NY 10023.

INTRODUCTION

The Arawaks and the Caribs

The first peoples to settle the Caribbean came from the Orinoco River basin in South America, an area which today forms part of Venezuela, Guyana and Brazil.

More than 2,000 years before the birth of Christ, a group known as the Ciboneys left their tropical forest home and began migrating north. The Ciboneys were cave-dwellers who lived by fishing and gathering wild foods. They were pre-ceramic, meaning they did not know the art of making pottery.

Beginning about 500 B.C., a more advanced people, the Arawaks, left the Orinoco. They traveled in large canoes made from hollowed-out tree trunks, each capable of holding dozens of people. They arrived first on Iere, today called Trinidad. Over the next centuries they settled almost all the Caribbean islands, absorbing the Ciboney communities.

Arawak-speaking peoples were divided into three groups. The Lucayanos lived mainly in the Bahamas. The Taínos lived on Cubanacán (Cuba), Borinquen (Puerto Rico), Xaymaca (Jamaica) and Quisqueya (Haiti and the Dominican Republic.) The Igneri inhabited the southern island of Iere (Trinidad).

We have learned about the Arawaks in several ways. Archaeologists have studied abandoned villages, buried under layers of earth. From the pottery, stone carvings, and other objects the native people left behind, scholars have composed a picture of their culture. Written accounts by Europeans who encountered the Arawaks provide additional information, although these travellers interpreted Arawak life through European eyes.

The Arawaks were a peaceful people who lived by farming, fishing and hunting. Their most important crop was cassava, a starchy root vegetable also called manioc or yuca. The Arawaks brought cassava from South America to the Caribbean, along with other valuable crops such as corn, sweet potatoes and peanuts. Jamaican writer Olive Senior describes the Arawak way of life in "The Arawaks of Jamaica."

Arawak villages were called *yucayeques*. Each village was governed by a *cacique*, or chief, who could be a man or a woman. Cooperation and sharing were basic to the Arawaks' way of life. Each village contained a central plaza, called a *batey*. These were used for festivals, ball games and religious ceremonies, described by Puerto Rican scholar Ricardo Alegría in "Areytos and Ball Games."

Sometime around the 11th century, a third group, the Caribs, left the Orinoco and began moving up the island chain. A warrior people, they raided the Arawaks' settlements. The Caribs also fished and grew cassava, corn and other crops.

Carib raids pushed the Arawaks into the northern Caribbean. The Caribs occupied the chain of smaller islands stretching from Puerto Rico south to Tobago. Only Barbados, which was difficult to reach because of unfa-

Artist: Rini Templeton

vorable winds, was not inhabited.

No one knows exactly how many people lived on the Caribbean islands in pre-Columbian times. Estimates vary from tens of thousands to more than eight million. This population was almost entirely destroyed by the European colonization which began in 1492 [see Unit 2]

Yet the native peoples' legacy is an important part of the Caribbean past. Many places in the islands bear their original Arawak or Carib names. A number of common English and Spanish words come from the native languages, including tobacco, buccaneer, canoe, hammock and hurricane. Many Caribbean people today have native American, as well as African and European, ancestry. Poet David Campbell, from Guyana, is of Arawak descent. In "Fishing for Haimara," he imagines the daily life that his Arawak ancestors might have lived.

Modern descendants of Caribs in Sauteurs, Grenada.

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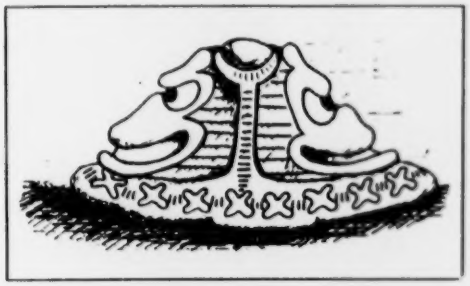
READING

The Arawaks of Jamaica

BY OLIVE SENIOR

The Arawaks arrived in Jamaica around 600 AD, having made their way northward in a series of migrations which took them from island to island. They were a flourishing tribe, and in time came to occupy virtually all the Caribbean. Their culture was most highly developed in the Greater Antilles°, especially Hispaniola and Puerto Rico.

Although by European standards the Arawaks were regarded as an extremely simple people, they nevertheless were skillful hunters, fishermen and farmers. They had established forms of social organization and religious beliefs and rituals. To the conquering Spaniards they also displayed many positive qualities. Their hospitality and generosity were legendary, and they were fundamentally peaceful and gentle.



The Arawaks carved figures in human and animal shapes from stone, shell, gold and other materials. The figures, called cemis, were used to drive away evil spirits and ensure a good harvest.

The Arawaks cultivated a wide variety of food crops, of which corn and cassava were the staples. They grew sweet potato, yampi°, arrowroot°, beans, peanuts, cocoa, among other foods, and spices and seasonings, including tomatoes and peppers. They also cultivated some fruit trees, although most grew wild. Cotton and tobacco were their other staple crops.

They were extremely knowledgeable about the properties and uses of plants, including how to extract the poison from cassava to make it edible. They used plants extensively for medicinal and religious purposes. They brewed a kind of beer from cassava, and gave to the world the name and practice of barbecuing meat. They used the wild calabash° to provide utensils of every kind, and made and traded in pottery, copper, gold and cotton items.

Their principal tool was an ax head made from stone. The Arawaks were famous for their skill as canoe makers; indeed, the word canoe is derived from their *canoa*. They felled cotton trees and hollowed out the insides, using fire and their stone implements. Some of their canoes were painted and decorated and were large enough to hold 100 men.

Their cotton cultivation was extensive. From cotton they wove hammocks (the word is derived from their word *hamaca*), which was their principal item of furniture. When Columbus arrived he found that the Arawaks of Jamaica were exporting cotton goods to the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola. They also supplied the Spaniards with sailcloth.

The Arawaks were skilled and ingenious

fishermen and hunters. They were helped by the fact that the Caribbean islands were at the time of the European conquest extremely fruitful and bounteous, with fruit, fish, turtle and game. Like other Amerindians°, the Arawaks cultivated and smoked tobacco, practices that were unknown to Europe until the Spanish conquest of the Americas.

The Arawaks lived in small village settlements near to rivers and sea, for they loved water. There was a division of labor in the villages. The women grew the crops and made cassava bread°, pottery, hammocks and bowls, carried loads, fetched water, cared for the livestock and garden plots, in addition to their child-rearing tasks. The men felled trees and cleared land, made canoes, went hunting and fishing, and organized defense and religious ceremonies. Each village had a headman or chief, called a *cacique*, and a religious leader.

The Arawaks and their way of life were doomed with the coming of the Europeans. The Spaniards first came to Jamaica to settle in 1509, and soon put the Indians to work. The Arawaks began to die off from overwork, cruelty, or from newly-introduced diseases such as smallpox and measles. Many were also killed by the Spaniards for sport. When the English captured the island in 1655, they claimed that, from an original population of 60,000 - 100,000, no Arawaks were to be found. A census of 1611 counted 24 Indians, though some probably survived in the mountains, and Arawak women might have joined the Maroons°.

–Adapted from: Olive Senior, *A-Z of Jamaican Heritage* (Heinemann, 1983).

Vocabulary

Greater Antilles: Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico

yampi: starchy root vegetable

arrowroot: starchy root used for food and medicinal purposes

calabash: a large round gourd which grows on trees. It can be hollowed out to make bowls and spoons.

Amerindians: native peoples of the Americas

cassava bread: flat cake made from grated cassava

Maroons: slaves who escaped from the plantations and set up independent communities

Native Americans making a canoe, as pictured by the European engraver De Bry.

The Taínos' only means of transportation were canoes, in which they traveled on rivers and the ocean. There were big canoes and little canoes. The big ones were used to travel long distances across the ocean from one island to another. The little ones were for traveling on the rivers. Big canoes could carry as many as 70 people, along with an ample supply of food and water.

Canoes were made from tree trunks, usually from the *ceiba* or silk-cotton tree, which has a big, erect trunk. When the Taínos wanted to make a canoe, they went to the forest, selected a tree that would be easy to get out, and cut it down with their stone axes. Then they began to shape the outside with axes and other stone tools. Next they hollowed out the trunk, burning it out first and finishing the inside with stone and shell tools. If the canoe was for a *cacique*, it was carefully decorated with designs in color.

–From: Ricardo E. Alegría, *History of the Indians of Puerto Rico*.

READING

Areytos and Ball Games

BY RICARDO E. ALEGRÍA

The Taínos used to hold big fiestas, or *areytos*, in their villages to celebrate important occasions such as the wedding of a chief, a victory in battle, a very good harvest or the arrival of a distinguished visitor.

Preparation for an *areyto* began days ahead of time and everybody helped to get the food and drink ready. Dishes the Taínos liked especially were served at an *areyto* and there was a great deal of drinking.

The *areyto* was held in the *batey*, or plaza, of the *yucayeque*. The *cacique* was director, or master of ceremonies, of the fiesta. He began by chanting songs that told about the history of the village. He named the former *caciques*, related the story of the *cemis* of the *yucayeque*, told of the good times and the bad times of the community and of any other important events in the past. In this way the Taínos learned and remembered the history of their village.

During the *areyto* there was singing and dancing. Sometimes the men and women danced apart, but other times they danced together. In one dance the Taínos formed a line with their hands on the shoulder of the person in front and in unison performed the steps the dance leader called for.

Musical instruments used for an *areyto* were the *güiro* (a long tree gourd scored along one side and scraped rhythmically with a bone or thin stone), *maracas*, bone flute and a drum made from the hollow trunk of a tree.

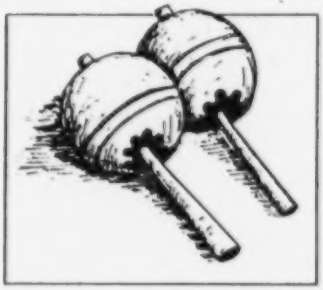
A few days before holding an *areyto* the cacique sent messengers to nearby villages inviting the people to come to the fiesta. Such celebrations helped to strengthen the friendship between neighboring *yucayeques*. An *areyto* sometimes lasted for several days.

Ball games were both part of certain religious ceremonies and the favorite amusement of the Taínos.

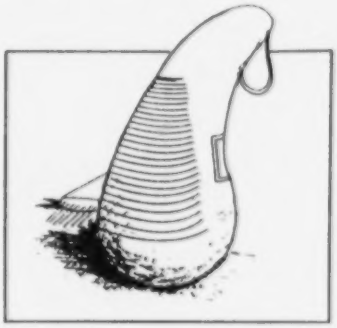
Games were played in the *batey* of the village or in a bigger space or court at the edge of the village. The *batey* had a hard, tamped-down dirt surface. It was longer than wide and had an earthen wall two or three feet high, or rows of stones, along the full length on both sides. On some of these stones the Taínos used to cut the figures of their *cemis*.

The ball used for the game was made from tree roots covered with a resinous, rubbery gum taken from the bark of certain trees. This resin or gum made the ball bounce when it hit the ground. These bouncing balls were the first time any Europeans or anyone from the Old World, had ever seen any kind of rubber.

Players in the game consisted of two teams or bands, each one having 20 to 30 players. The *batey* was divided across the middle, one half for each team. According to the rules, a player could hit the



maracas



güiro

ball with his head, knees, hips or elbows, but not with his hands.

To start the game, a member of one team threw the ball toward the other side, which had to throw it back without letting it fall and lie on the ground. If the ball fell to the ground and bounced it remained in play. The team that let the ball fall and lie on the ground the most times without bouncing lost the game.

Games were played between teams of the same *yucayeque* or with teams from neighboring villages. The Taínos liked to bet on their favorite team. Since they had no money, bets were made with ornaments, weapons, tools and other possessions.

–Reprinted from: Ricardo E. Alegría, *History of the Indians of Puerto Rico* (San Juan: Colección de Estudios Puertorriqueños, 1974).

Some Arawak and Carib Words

Arawak

hamaca	hammock
manioc	cassava
batata	sweet potato
bohio	house
caney	chief's house
cacique	chief
guanín	gold and copper disk worn as an ornament
cemí	sacred object
areyto	festival with singing and dancing
duho	ceremonial seat
batey	central plaza in a village
metate	stone for grinding cassava
yucayeque	village
nitaíno	village leader

Carib

carbet	community meeting house
ubutu	chief
watu	fire
kunobu	rain
kueya	sun
ouicou	manioc beer
canoua	canoe

Arawak and Carib Place-Names

Many cities and towns in the Caribbean retain their original Arawak or Carib names. Here are a few:

- Mayaguana, the Bahamas
- Bayamón, Puerto Rico
- Caguas, Puerto Rico
- Humacao, Puerto Rico
- Higüey, Dominican Republic
- Lascahobas, Haiti
- Guantánamo, Cuba
- Camagüey, Cuba
- Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago
- Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Tobago
- The town of Sauteurs (French for "leapers") in Grenada is named for Leapers' Hill, where Caribs battling the French in 1654 jumped into the sea rather than be captured or killed.

Arawak homes were called bohios.

READING

Fishing for Haimara

BY DAVID CAMPBELL

Fishing for haimara°, small pirai° and patwa°
Hunting for the labba° in the dawn
Picking sweet papaya, planting new cassava
Glad when the hot midday sun was gone
Sometimes the floods came yellowing the growing corn
Sometimes the warm rains stayed away for very long
But all the people worked together sun or rain
Until the corn and the cassava grew again.

–Reprinted from: *Through Arawak Eyes: Songs and Poetry by David Campbell*. (Toronto: Development Education Centre, 1975).

Vocabulary

haimara: river fish found in interior Guyana

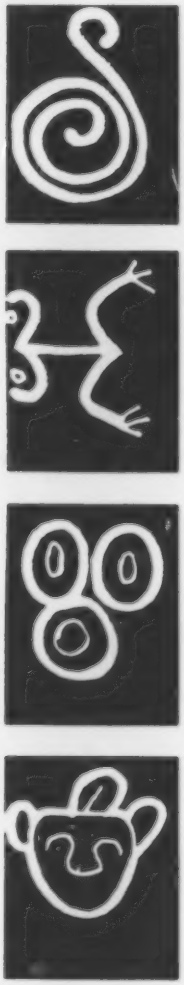
pirai: pirənha

patwa: small freshwater fish

labba: large wild rodent

PART TWO

CONQUEST AND COLONIAL RULE



The European invasion of the Caribbean, beginning with the arrival of Columbus and his adventurers, destroyed the native communities. Claiming possession of the land, the governments of Spain, England, France and Holland set up colonies on the Caribbean islands.

Plantations in the colonies grew sugar for export, using slave labor. For the people of the Caribbean, this was a terrible time. It set the stage for a prolonged struggle by Caribbean people for freedom and independence.

UNIT 2: The Conquest

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Describe the impact of European colonization on the native peoples of the Caribbean
2. Critically examine differing viewpoints on the "discovery" of the Americas

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Who discovered America? How do you know? What do we mean by the word discovery? If Columbus did not discover America, then why do you think he is honored today?
2. What results did the King and Queen of Spain expect from Columbus's trip? Why did Columbus return several times to the New World?
3. Why did Columbus call the Arawaks and Caribs "Indians?" Is this what they called themselves? What other terms could we use?
4. Why did the Spanish rulers feel justified in claiming the islands Columbus landed on? Do you think they were justified, or not? Explain.
5. If you were an Arawak or Carib *cacique*, what reasons could you give to argue that the islands belonged to your people?
6. Why did Agueybana and the other chiefs feel justified in using violence against the Spanish? Do you think they were justified, or not? Explain.
7. Do you think the legend about Agueybana the Brave is all true, partly true, or not true at all? Did the Arawaks give up their resistance after Agueybana's death? If not, then why might the legend be told with this ending?
8. What finally happened to the Arawaks and Caribs? If this account of the discovery of the Americas differs from what you heard before, how do you account for the difference?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

[Note: The following activities have been adapted from William Bigelow's article "Discovering Columbus: Re-reading the Past," in Language Arts, October 1989. The instructor can choose from the activities or do all three in sequence. One option is to use activity #1 on the first day, assign #2 for homework and use #3 on the second day.]

1. a) Begin the class by reviewing with students what they know, or

think they know, about Columbus.

b) Take a purse from a student's desk. (Pre-arrange this demonstration with the student.) Make sure the class sees you take the purse. As you unzip the bag and reveal its contents, announce that it's yours. For example, "I found this lipstick. That proves that it's my purse."

Students will protest your lack of respect for their classmate's property. Challenge the students to prove it is **not** your purse. Help them by asking leading questions: "If we had a test on the contents of the purse who would do better, (name of student) or I?" "Whose labor earned the money that bought the things in the purse, mine or hers?"

In your last effort to keep the purse, ask: "But I discovered this purse; why isn't it mine?"

c) Ask the students "Why do we say that Columbus **discovered** America?" From whose perspective was it a discovery? What other term might the Arawaks and Caribs have used to describe what happened?

d) Read aloud the first passage from Howard Zinn's *Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress* (to asterisks).

e) Ask students if they remember hearing or reading what Columbus brought back with him from his first journey to the New World. They may recall parrots, plants, some gold and a few of the people Columbus had started calling "Indians." Ask them what he brought back on his second voyage.

f) Read aloud the remaining text from Zinn.

g) Dramatize a scene from Columbus' second voyage. He still believes there is gold to be found and that the Arawaks are holding back. Ask students to play Columbus while you be an Arawak. Say, "Mr. Columbus, we don't have any gold. Can't we go back to living our lives and you can go back to wherever you came from?" Call on several students to respond to the Arawaks' plea.

2. Each student chooses one of the following writing assignments. The finished essays can be read aloud in class and used as a basis for debate.

- The Caribbean writer Jan Carew begins an essay on Columbus this way: "On the morning of October 12, 1492, a gathering of Arawakian Lucayos discovered Christopher Columbus and his sailors on the eastern shore of their homeland of Guanahani."

  Using this as your opening sentence, write an account of the first encounter between Columbus and the Arawaks **from an Arawak point of view**. Draw on your knowledge of Arawak culture.

- Draft an editorial for the school newspaper about Columbus Day. Should your school celebrate Columbus Day? Why or why not? Should we observe the holiday in any other way? Be sure to state a clear thesis and support your views with evidence.

- You are an Arawak. Write a poem entitled "Columbus Day."

3. Find a social studies textbook, at either grade school or high school level, or select one of the many children's books about Columbus. The assignment will be more interesting if more than one book is used. Students are to evaluate the book's treatment of Columbus and the Arawaks, considering the following questions:

- How factually accurate is the account, as far as you know?
- What, if anything, has been omitted, that in your judgment is important for a full understanding of Columbus?
- What motives does the book ascribe to the Spanish conquerors? Is this accurate?
- Who does the book encourage you to "root for," and how does it accomplish that?
- How does the book portray the Arawaks? Is it accurate?
- In your opinion, why does the book portray the encounter between Columbus and the Arawaks the way it does?
- If the textbooks you have reviewed give an inaccurate picture, what impact do you think that may have on life today?

Have students share their papers with one another in small groups, noting points of agreement and difference. Afterwards, use the papers as a basis for class discussion. Students may wish to write to the publishers of the textbooks they reviewed, praising or criticizing the account.

4. As a follow-up, students can write and illustrate children's books about Columbus. Encourage them to do further research on the cultures of the Arawaks and Caribs, and to present their point of view when describing the European conquest. The finished books can be shared with younger students in the school.

[Note to the instructor: The disruption of their myths about Columbus may be upsetting to students. You may wish to discuss this in class, emphasizing that it is important for students to examine bias and unstated assumptions in everything they read. The goal is not for them to become cynical, but to become active, critical participants in their own learning.]

▶ RESOURCES

1. Two books which address the question of contacts between the Old World and the Americas in pre-Columbian times:

- Barry Fell, *America B.C.: Ancient Settlers in the New World* (Pocket Books, 1976).

• Ivan Van Sertima, *They Came Before Columbus: The African Presence in Ancient America* (Random House, 1976). A Caribbean anthropologist argues that Africans came to the Americas long before the arrival of the Spanish.

2. Most textbooks and children's biographies of Columbus present a distorted view of history. They glorify the conquest and gloss over the destruction of the Native communities. The following give a more truthful account, based largely on writings by Columbus and his contemporaries:

Primary sources

• *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*. Translated by Cecil Jane. (Available from Outlet Book Co., (800) 526-4264.)

• Bartolomé de las Casas, *History of the Indies*. Edited and translated by Andre Collard. (Harper and Row, 1971).

• *The Life of Admiral Cristóbal Colón by His Son Ferdinand*. Translated and edited by Benjamin Keen. (Rutgers Univ. Press, 1959).

Secondary sources

• Hans Koning, *Columbus: His Enterprise* (Monthly Review Press, 1991.) With an afterward for teachers by Bill Bigelow.

• Milton Meltzer, *Columbus and the World Around Him* (Franklin Watts, 1990).

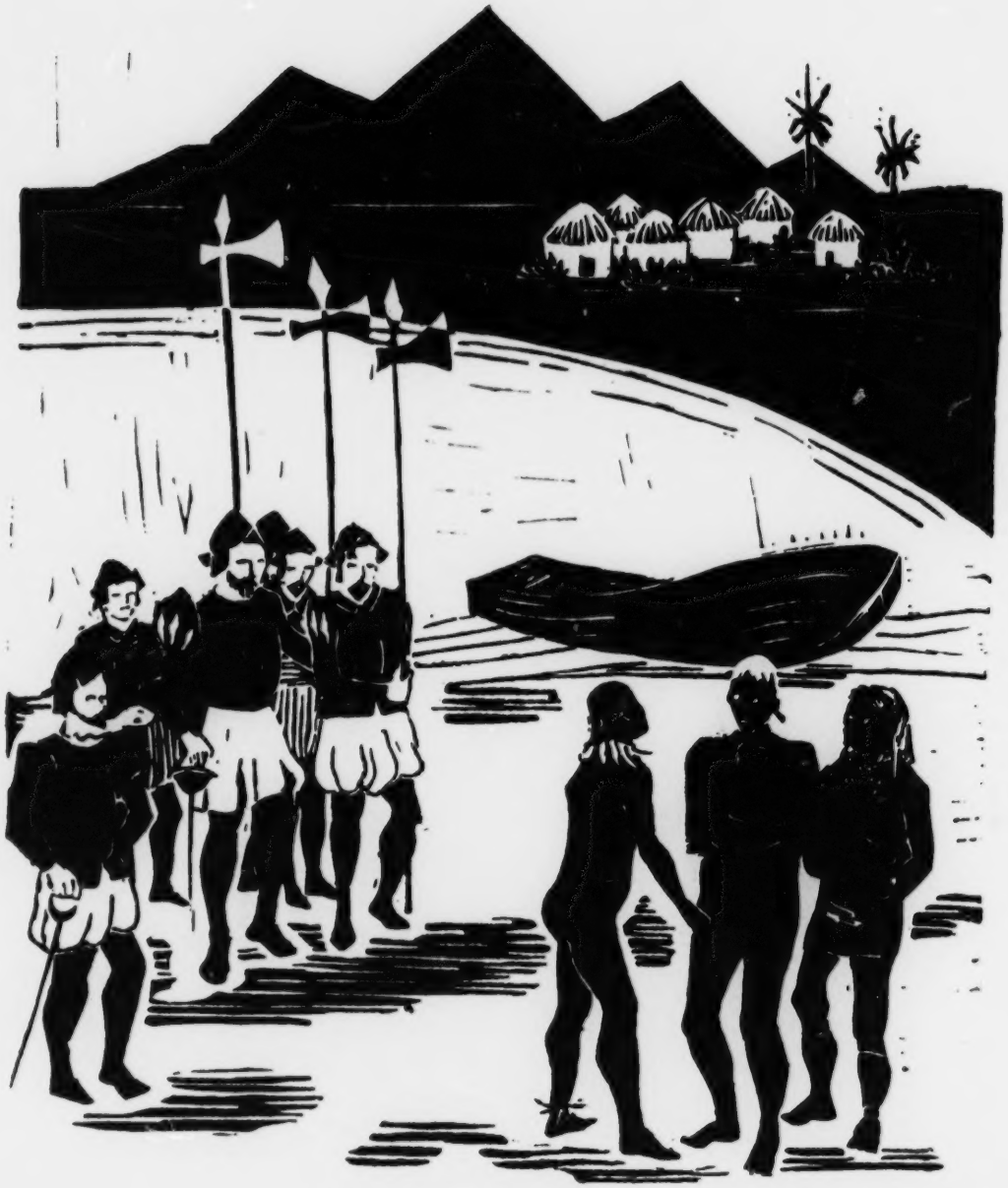
3. *Rethinking Columbus* is a collection of essays and resources for teaching about the 500th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas. Includes a review of children's books about Columbus, writings by Native Americans, ideas on combatting anti-Indian stereotypes, and extensive resource listings. Rethinking Schools, 1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212. (414) 964-9646. Bulk rates available.

4. "View From the Shore: American Indian Perspectives on the Quincentenary" presents essays by Native American writers on the history and contemporary experience of indigenous peoples in the Americas. Includes pieces on the Arawaks and Caribs, and a large listing of indigenous organizations. American Indian Program, 300 Caldwell Hall, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY 14853.

5. The Columbus in Context Coalition, affiliated with Clergy and Laity Concerned, is a clearinghouse for alternative teaching resources related to Columbus. CALC, 198 Broadway, Suite 305, New York, NY 10038.

6. "Columbus and the Origins of Racism in the Americas," in Jan Carew, *Fulcrums of Change: Origins of Racism in the Americas and Other Essays* (Africa World Press, 1988). A challenging essay for advanced students.

7. The North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) is publishing a series of four issues on the quincentenary. NACLA, 475 Riverside Drive, #454, New York, NY 10115.



Artist's impression of the initial encounter between Taíno Arawaks and Spaniards on Borinquen. Artist: Mela Pons de Alegría.

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INTRODUCTION

The Conquest

Sailing west in 1492, the Italian navigator Christopher Columbus and his Spanish crew were looking for the "Indies," as they called Asia. They hoped to find gold and silver to make themselves wealthy men. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabela of Spain had promised Columbus 10 percent of all the profits from his exploration. He would also be named governor of the lands he found, and become a nobleman and an admiral in the Spanish Navy.

The Spanish monarchs had their own reasons for supporting Columbus's voyage. Spain was moving from a system of feudal agriculture to one based on manufacturing and trade. Spices, silks and precious metals from Asia were in demand. Spanish merchants, eager to find a cheaper route to Asia, helped finance Columbus's journey. Advances in navigation and ship-building had made distant exploration possible.

Spain had just reconquered the Iberian peninsula, driving out the Moors, a Muslim people from North Africa. Now the Spanish rulers hoped to find precious metals in foreign lands to replenish the treasury. Seven hundred years of warfare against the Moors had created a class of Spanish "warrior noblemen," who saw war as a way to gain personal wealth and prestige. The war against the Moors also reinforced ideas that white Europeans should conquer people of color and convert non-Christians to Catholicism. Such men, and such ideas, went with Columbus across the ocean.

Although Columbus was a brilliant navigator, he did not, in fact, discover America. That honor belonged to the Native American peoples who found the land when it was uninhabited, and built flourishing communities. Nor was Columbus the first outsider to make contact with the Americas. Viking and Celtic explorers had made the journey five centuries earlier. And there is evidence that African sailors, merchants and explorers may have reached the Americas long before Columbus.

On the strength of his "discovery," however, Columbus claimed ownership of Cubanacán, Xaymaca, Borinquen and Quisqueya for Spain. The main Spanish base was on Quisqueya. Columbus renamed it Hispaniola, "the Spanish island."

The Spanish monarchs granted tracts of land in the islands to Spanish settlers. These land grants, called *encomiendas*, allowed the settlers to enslave the native people living on the land. The Spanish forced the Arawaks to work on farms and ranches and in unproductive gold mines. Arawaks who failed to pay a tribute in gold were punished brutally, and some were sent back to Spain to be sold as slaves.

Columbus himself recorded these events in his journal, and Bartolomé de las Casas, a Spanish priest who accompanied Columbus, confirmed them. American historian Howard Zinn recounts this often overlooked side of history in "Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress."

Although the Arawaks had welcomed the Europeans, they soon revolted against their enslavement. Rebellions broke out everywhere. The Spanish defeated them with firearms, armor-covered horses and fighting dogs. A major revolt occurred on the island of Borinquen—Puerto Rico—in 1511. Federico Ribes Tovar, a Puerto Rican writer, retells the legend of "Agueybana the Brave."

Spain claimed but did not settle the islands of the southern Caribbean. Not only were

these islands small, but they were fiercely defended by the Caribs. Taking advantage of Spain's neglect, Britain and France staked claims to the smaller islands during the 17th century. They fought the Caribs in bloody battles.

Within 200 years of the Europeans' arrival, the native populations had been all but destroyed. Starvation, disease, suicide and massacres killed most of the Arawaks and Caribs. Some surviving Caribs retreated into strongholds on the mountainous islands of St. Vincent and Dominica. Today, a reservation on Dominica is home to a few thousand Carib descendants.

He says that his name is Columbus, and he's just discovered us!

In the United States we celebrate Columbus's journey to the Americas, admiring his adventurous spirit and his navigational skills. It is often forgotten that there is another side to this history, one which led to the destruction of a people and their way of life. Five hundred years after Columbus's arrival, it is appropriate to examine our myths about the "discovery" of the Americas and the legacy of the conquest.

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READING

Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress

BY HOWARD ZINN

Arawak men and women, naked, tawny, and full of wonder, emerged from their villages onto the island's beaches and swam out to get a closer look at the strange big boat. When Columbus and his sailors came ashore, carrying swords, speaking oddly, the Arawaks ran to greet them, brought them food, water, gifts. He later wrote of this in his log:

> They...brought us parrots and balls of cotton and spears and many other things, which they exchanged for the glass beads and hawks' bells. They willingly traded everything they owned:...They were well-built, with good bodies and handsome features ... They do not bear arms, and do not know them, for I showed them a sword, they took it by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane... They would make fine servants... With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.

Christopher Columbus

These Arawaks of the Bahama Islands were much like Indians on the mainland, who were remarkable (European observers were to say again and again) for their hospitality, their belief in sharing. These traits did not stand out in the Europe of the Renaissance ...

Columbus wrote:

> As soon as I arrived in the Indies, on the first Island which I found, I took some of the natives by force in order that they might learn and might give me information of whatever there is in these parts.

The information that Columbus wanted most was: Where is the gold? He had persuaded the king and queen of Spain to finance an expedition to the lands, the wealth, he expected would be on the other side of the Atlantic—the Indies and Asia, gold and spices ... In return for bringing back gold and spices, they promised Columbus 10 percent of the profits, governorship over new-found lands, and the fame that would go with a new title: Admiral of the Ocean Sea.

Slaves and Gold

So, approaching land, they were met by the Arawak Indians, who swam out to greet them. The Arawaks lived in village communes[0], and had a developed agriculture of corn, yams[0], cassava[0]. They could spin and weave, but they had no horses or work animals. They had no iron, but they wore tiny gold ornaments in their ears.

This was to have enormous consequences: it led Columbus to take some of them aboard ship as prisoners because he insisted that they guide him to the source of the gold. He then sailed to what is now Cuba, then to Hispaniola (the island which today consists of Haiti and the Dominican Republic). There,

Hatuey, an Arawak **cacique,** *fled with his people from Hispaniola to Cuba to escape the Spaniards. He was captured and burnt alive.*

bits of visible gold in the rivers, and a gold mask presented to Columbus by a local Indian chief, led to wild visions of gold fields.

On Hispaniola, out of timbers from the *Santa Maria*, which had run aground, Columbus built a fort, the first European military base in the Western Hemisphere. He called it Navidad (Christmas) and left thirty-nine crew members there, with instructions to find and store the gold. He took more Indian prisoners and put them aboard his two remaining ships ...

Columbus's report to the Court in Madrid was extravagant. He insisted he had reached Asia (it was Cuba) and an island off the coast of China (Hispaniola). His descriptions were part fact, part fiction:

> Hispaniola is a miracle. Mountains and hills, plains and pastures, are both fertile and beautiful...the harbors are unbelievably good and there are many wide rivers of which the majority contain gold...There are many spices, and great mines of gold and other metals...

The Indians, Columbus reported, "are so naive and so free with their possessions that no one who has not witnessed them would believe it. When you ask for something they have, they never say no. To the contrary, they offer to share with anyone..." He concluded his report by asking for a little help from their Majesties, and in return he would bring them from his next voyage "as much gold as they need ... and as many slaves as they ask."

***

Because of Columbus's exaggerated report and promises, his second expedition was given seventeen ships and more than twelve hundred men. The aim was clear: slaves and gold. They went from island to island in the Caribbean, taking Indians as captives. But as word spread of the Europeans' intent they found more and more empty villages ...

Now, from his base on [Hispaniola], Columbus sent expedition after expedition into the interior. They found no gold fields, but had to fill up the ships returning to Spain with some kind of dividend. In the year 1495, they went on a great slave raid, rounded up fifteen hundred Arawak men, women, and children, put them in pens guarded by Spaniards and dogs, then picked the five hundred best specimens to load onto ships. Of those five hundred, two hundred died en route. The rest arrived alive in Spain and were put up for sale by the archdeacon of the town ...

But too many of the slaves died in captivity. And so Columbus, desperate to pay back

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dividends to those who had invested, had to make good his promise to fill the ships with gold. In the province of Cibao on Hispaniola, where he and his men imagined huge gold fields to exist, they ordered all persons fourteen years or older to collect a certain quantity of gold every three months. When they brought it, they were given copper tokens to hang around their necks. Indians found without a copper token had their hands cut off and bled to death.

The Indians had been given an impossible task. The only gold around was bits of dust garnered from the streams. So they fled, were hunted down with dogs, and were killed.

Trying to put together an army of resistance, the Arawaks faced Spaniards who had armor, muskets, swords, horses. When the Spaniards took prisoners they hanged them or burned them to death. Among the Arawaks, mass suicides began, with cassava poison[9]. Infants were killed to save them from the Spaniards. In two years, through murder, mutilation, or suicide, half of the 250,000 Indians on [Hispaniola] were dead.

When it became clear that there was no gold left, the Indians were taken as slave labor on huge estates, known later as *encomiendas*[9]. They were worked at a ferocious pace, and died by the thousands. By the year 1515, there were perhaps fifty thousand Indians left. By 1550, there were five hundred. A report of the year 1650 shows none of the original Arawaks or their descendants left on the island.

–Abridged from: Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (Harper and Row, 1980).

Vocabulary

communes: groups living together cooperatively

yams: starchy root vegetable

cassava: starchy root vegetable

archdeacon: Catholic bishop's attendant

cassava poison: certain varieties of cassava contain a poisonous juice

encomienda: the Spanish monarchy granted individual Spaniards parcels of land in the Caribbean colonies. These land grants, or *encomiendas*, included rights to enslave the native peoples living on them.

READING

Agueybana the Brave

BY FEDERICO RIBES TOVAR

Agueybana I was the supreme *cacique* of Borinquen when the Spanish arrived in 1508. On his death, his sister's son inherited the *cacicato*, or chiefdom. His name was also Agueybana, so he is known as Agueybana II.

Agueybana II was a robust, active and self-assured young man. He lived in the *encomienda* and town of Sotomayor. As a sign of friendship with the Spanish, he had taken the name of the founder and head of the town, Captain Don Cristóbal de Sotomayor. When the Spanish first came to Borinquen, the Arawaks had lived peacefully with them, helping them build towns and develop mining and agriculture. But by 1511, the native people were in despair over the *encomienda* regime, in which parcels of land, together with the Arawaks living on them, were divided up among the Spanish. The Spanish imposed heavy tributes, forcing the Arawaks to labor in the mines and ranches. The indigenous people had become slaves, forced to work their own lands for the benefit of others.

When Agueybana II saw his people's outrage overwhelm them, he called a meeting of all the chiefs on the island. He spoke to them of their loss of freedom, of the growing control of their land by the Spanish, of the disruption of their traditional way of life. He proposed that each *cacique* would kill the Spaniards living on his territory, and that the *cacique* Guarionex would lead an attack on the town of Sotomayor, killing the Spanish ruler and all the inhabitants by setting fire to the town.

Old engraving shows combat between the Caribs and the Spanish.

But many of the chiefs resisted. They believed that the Spanish were immortal. So it was agreed that the *cacique* Urayoán would attempt to kill the first Spaniard he found and report the outcome.

Sixteenth-century Spanish soldier with his harquebus.

One day, when a Spaniard called Salcedo was being carried across a river on the shoulders of his Arawak servants, they held him under the water until he drowned. When after three days he did not come back to life, the news was sent to Agueybana II that the Spanish were not immortal.

Meeting again, the *caciques* of Borinquen agreed to revolt. Sotomayor was the first to perish, and the town named for him was burned to the ground. Other unsuspecting Spaniards, working on their estates around the island, also died that night. Only those living in the town of Caparra with the governor, Don Juan Ponce de León, were spared.

Ponce de León organized the Spanish counterattack. Due to the superiority of their firearms against the Arawak's bows and arrows, small number of Spaniards were able to rout much larger numbers of Arawaks. After three such encounters, the Arawaks sought help from the Caribs living on neighboring islands, who had been their traditional enemies.

Finally Ponce de León, with 100 men under the command of three captains, was ready to fight the decisive battle. But as the Spanish were greatly outnumbered—there were some 11,000 Arawaks and Caribs—he decided to retreat to Caparra and wait for reinforcements from the nearby Spanish colony of Santo Domingo. Much to their surprise, the Spanish were able to retreat unmolested. The reason became clear some time later. In a skirmish with the rebels near his camp, Juan de León (not to be confused with the Governor Juan Ponce de León) had noticed a large man wearing on his chest a *guanín*, or gold disk, marking him as a *cacique*. Juan de León shot and killed him with his harquebus[0]. This brave warrior, who had been urging his people to a massive attack on the Spanish that would finish the battle decisively, was the great chief Agueybana II.

Their leader dead, the indigenous people gave up the fight. The Spanish were able to retreat to Caparra without fear of attack.

In Caparra, Governor Ponce de León demanded that the Arawaks cease hostilities and submit to the authority of the King of Spain. Only two chiefs agreed: the one called Caguas, of the area of Turabo, and the chief of Utuado, who had been baptized with the name Don Alonso. The other indigenous people were placed in *encomiendas* to serve the Spanish, and many were sold at public auctions.

After the death of Agueybana II, the Arawaks of Puerto Rico gradually became extinct.

–Translated and adapted from: Federico Ribes Tovar, *100 Biografías de Puertorriqueños Ilustres* (Plus Ultra Educational Publishers, 1973).

Vocabulary

harquebus: early firearm

UNIT 3: Bitter Sugar

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Examine economic, racial and political reasons for slavery in the Americas
2. Explain how the Triangular Trade functioned
3. View slavery and the slave trade from an African's perspective

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What were the reasons for the development of the slave system in the Caribbean? Consider both economic and racial factors in your answer.
2. Which groups profited and which lost in the Triangular Trade? What were some long-range consequences of this relationship?
3. Is there a contemporary triangular trade? Consider: weapons, oil, drugs, refugees ... What similarities can you see with the sugar/slave trade of the 1700s?
4. Who was Olaudah Equiano? Point out the places he lived on a map (West Africa, Barbados, the United States and England).
5. For Equiano, what was one of the cruelest aspects of slavery?
6. Is Equiano's story history? How does it compare to a textbook account? How would you evaluate his credibility? Why are there few documents like Equiano's?
7. What questions would you ask Ouladah Equiano if you could?
8. In "Ballad of My Two Grandfathers," what is the poet saying about Caribbean people's heritage? How does he feel about it?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Have students position themselves in three corners of the room, forming a triangle. Label the areas "Africa," "Europe," and "the Americas." Students will stage a dramatic reading of "The Slave Trade: A Triangle of Commerce."

   Next, give each student a blank map of the world. They will label the major points of the Triangular Trade and draw arrows to indicate the flows of goods and human beings exchanged. They may draw a picture at each point to illustrate the process.

2. Following the readings, have each student select one of the following roles:

- The owner of a sugar plantation in the Caribbean
- An African woman captured and transported across the Atlantic by slave traders
- Her child, born on a Caribbean plantation
- The owner of a slave ship

Doing more research if necessary, students will write brief first-person narratives describing their character's life, how the Triangular Trade affected him or her, and what resources he or she had to influence government policies regarding slavery.

3. Students choose one of the following essay topics:

- "The story of a lump of sugar is a whole lesson in political economy, in politics and also in morality." — Auguste Cochin

  Why did the speaker say this? Make your answer specific.

- "I do not know if coffee and sugar are essential to the happiness of Europe, but I know well that these two products have accounted for the unhappiness of two great regions of the world: America has been depopulated so as to have land on which to plant them; Africa has been depopulated so as to have the people to cultivate them." — J.H. Bernardin de Saint Pierre, 1773

  Agree or disagree? Support your answer with facts.

- You are a lump of sugar. Write a poem or first-person narrative describing your experiences—how and where you were produced, where you were sent, who finally ate you.

4. The class stages a mock session of the British Parliament to debate the abolition of slavery. Ask students to imagine that, as members of Parliament, they have read Oloudah Equiano's book. Each student will write and deliver a speech urging the government to stop the slave trade. They should rebut arguments for continuing the trade, as well as presenting an emotional appeal.

RESOURCES

1. Two histories of the Caribbean which treat the plantation system in detail:

   Lennox Honychurch, *The Caribbean People* (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1979, 1980, 1981). Three volumes, suitable for middle schools.

   William Claypole and John Robottom, *Caribbean Story* (Longman Group Ltd., 1981). Two volumes, suitable for high schools.

2. Works addressing the size and scope of the slave trade in the Americas:

   Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

Stanley L. Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., *Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1975).

3. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (University of North Carolina Press, 1944). Argues that Caribbean slavery provided the wealth for the development of industrial capitalism in Europe. For advanced students.

4. Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (Viking Press, 1985). Why sugar became a precious commodity, and how its production and trade changed history.

5. Slave narratives from the North American colonies may provide interesting comparisons to Oloudah Equiano's experience. Works include:

- Henry Louis Gates, Jr., ed., *The Classic Slave Narratives* (NAL Penguin, 1987). Includes four of the most important writers: Equiano, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs and Mary Prince.

Benjamin A. Botkin, ed., *Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1945).

- Norman R. Yetman, ed., *Life Under the "Peculiar Institution": Selections from the Slave Narrative Collection* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

INTRODUCTION

Bitter Sugar

After Spain's Caribbean conquest, its focus shifted to the American mainland. Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo became supply-stations for Spanish expeditions on the way to seek gold and silver in Mexico and Peru. Spanish settlers on the islands farmed and raised livestock, using small numbers of slaves from Africa.

England, France and Holland viewed the Caribbean differently. By the middle of the 1600s, a new economic theory called **mercantilism** was in vogue. This theory held that a nation could become rich through trade. Colonies would produce wealth by growing crops to send to Europe.

England, France and Holland staked claims to the islands Spain had not settled. In 1655, England seized the island of Jamaica from Spain. The four European nations went on to divide up the entire Caribbean. Constantly at war among themselves, they snatched the islands back and forth as spoils of war.

The Plantation System

One crop was valued above all others: sugar. Once a luxury for the wealthy, sugar was becoming part of the daily diet of everyone in Europe. The rising popularity of tea, coffee and cocoa increased the demand for sugar.

To be profitable, sugar had to be grown on large farms called **plantations**. Each was worked by dozens or even hundreds of laborers. The governments of Britain and France first tried to provide this labor by shipping convicts, debtors and political opponents to the colonies. Some poor Europeans signed themselves into servitude voluntarily. But there were not enough of them to satisfy the labor needs of the giant plantations.

Planting sugar cane.

The boiling house, where cane juice was boiled to produce sugar crystals.

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The Portuguese and the Dutch had begun transporting captives from Africa to the Americas in the 1500s. Beginning in the mid-1600s, France and England also sent slaving expeditions to the African coast. After transporting African captives to the Caribbean, the ships returned to Europe loaded with sugar, and from there set sail to Africa again. This three-way journey was called "the triangular trade." Dominican historian Lennox Honychurch describes how the trade functioned.

The raw sugar sent to England was refined, then exported at a profit. The British colonists had to buy all their food and other necessities from England, and they could ship their sugar only in British ships. British sugar refiners, manufacturers, merchants and shipbuilders all made tremendous profits. They used their wealth to buy political influence, ensuring that the British government would continue the slave trade.

The vast fortunes made off the triangular trade were reinvested in British banking, finance and industry. In this way, African people's labor provided some of the capital which financed England's Industrial Revolution.

The Spanish colonies developed large sugar industries at a later date. Cuba and Puerto Rico began large-scale sugar production in the 1820s, as slavery in the British and French colonies was coming to an end. By 1882 Cuba was a sugar powerhouse. Its huge plantations produced nearly twice as much sugar as all the British Caribbean territories combined.

An African's Testimony

Most historical accounts of slavery were written by Europeans who either defended the slavery system or opposed it. But a few documents written by the slaves themselves have survived. These provide a valuable glimpse of the slavery experience from an African point of view.

Olaudah Equiano was born in Africa in 1748, and sold into slavery while still a child. He worked on a plantation in the United States, served under an English naval officer, and was resold into slavery in the Caribbean. Equiano learned to speak and write English fluently, and eventually earned enough money to purchase his freedom. He settled in England, where he wrote *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*.

Equiano's book, published in 1789, gained wide notice. The book was submitted to the British Parliament as part of a campaign to end the slave trade.

For millions of Caribbean people, the history of sugar and slavery is a bitter one. Yet the Caribbean story also centers on the courage and determination of the people who survived and built Caribbean societies. In "Ballad of My Two Grandfathers," Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén offers a personal perspective on this epoch and its place in the Caribbean heritage.

READING

The Slave Trade: A Triangle of Commerce

BY LENNOX HONYCHURCH

Let us for a few minutes imagine that we are watching an historical film of the Caribbean set in the year 1750. There are three main areas of action: the Caribbean, Europe and West Africa. The camera has been able to take us swiftly from place to place so that we can observe what is happening in each area at the same time.

The first scenes are set in the Caribbean. On the cinema screen we see new fields of sugar cane being planted, the ripe canes being carried to mills for processing and then refined sugar being taken in barrels to the seaports in each colony. Sailing ships are loaded with island produce and set sail across the Atlantic bound for Europe.

Swiftly the scene changes and we are taken to the business centers of France Britain, Holland, Denmark, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. These are the countries which had interests in the Caribbean based on trade, manufacturing or plantations. The film shows us merchants and proprietors[0] deep in conversation

The triangular trade.

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with politicians, courtiers[0] and monarchs. Some of them are standing on board ships in cold, noisy seaports or are huddled around fires at inns and taverns. At the palace of Versailles in France, King Louis XV sits at an elegant table with his finance minister talking over a mass of papers and maps showing the coast of Africa and islands of the Caribbean. Like the other persons we have seen they are discussing trade, sugar, slaves, currency, investment and commodity prices. At small factories in England, Holland and France we see guns, iron bars, bowls and tools being produced. These valuable trading goods are packed in the holds of vessels moored along the busy quaysides[0].

The scene changes yet again and we are shown inside the British House of Commons[0] in London where a crowded session is in progress. The members are debating legislation dealing with trade. The camera moves closer to one man who is making a speech.

"Everyone agrees," he is saying, "that the West India and Africa trades are the most nationally beneficial of any we carry on. It is agreed that the trade to Africa is the branch which renders our American colonies and plantations so advantageous to Great Britain ... It affords our planters a constant supply of slaves for the culture of their lands in the produce of sugars, tobacco, rice, rum, cotton, fustick[0], pimento[0] and all others our plantations produce. It employs our seamen and shipping...It is the daily bread of our manufacturers...the trade, therefore, and all resulting from it is a fund of wealth and naval power to this nation." There is applause from other members of the House.

Slowly this scene fades and we are shown the third area of action: the coast of West Africa. The sun beats down on a long sandy beach where the Atlantic Ocean breaks in tremendous surf. At the mouth of a river there is a large stone fortress surrounded by a village of rough huts. Further inland lie mangrove[0] swamps buzzing with mosquitoes and for hundreds of miles beyond this stretches the tropical African jungle and open bushland[0]. As the camera turns westward to the ocean we see a large ship moving towards the empty horizon. It is a slave ship loaded with African slaves on its way to the Caribbean. We see it getting small and smaller until it disappears altogether and our film comes to an end.

During those scenes we were taken to the three main trading centers which existed during the years of plantation slavery. In Europe, ships were loaded with guns, cloth, liquor and other goods and sailed to West Africa. Here these goods were traded for African slaves who were packed aboard the ships and transported across the Atlantic to be sold to planters in the Caribbean. There the ships were loaded with colonial produce before sailing back to Europe. Because the course taken by these ships was more or less triangular, this was called "The Triangular Trade."

-Abridged from: Lennox Honychurch, *The Caribbean People (Book Two)* (Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1980).

Vocabulary

proprietor: merchant or rich nobleman who financed and owned a Caribbean sugar plantation

courtier: attendant at a royal court

quayside: dock for loading and unloading ships

House of Commons: part of the British Parliament, or legislature

fustick: wood used to make dye

pimento: allspice

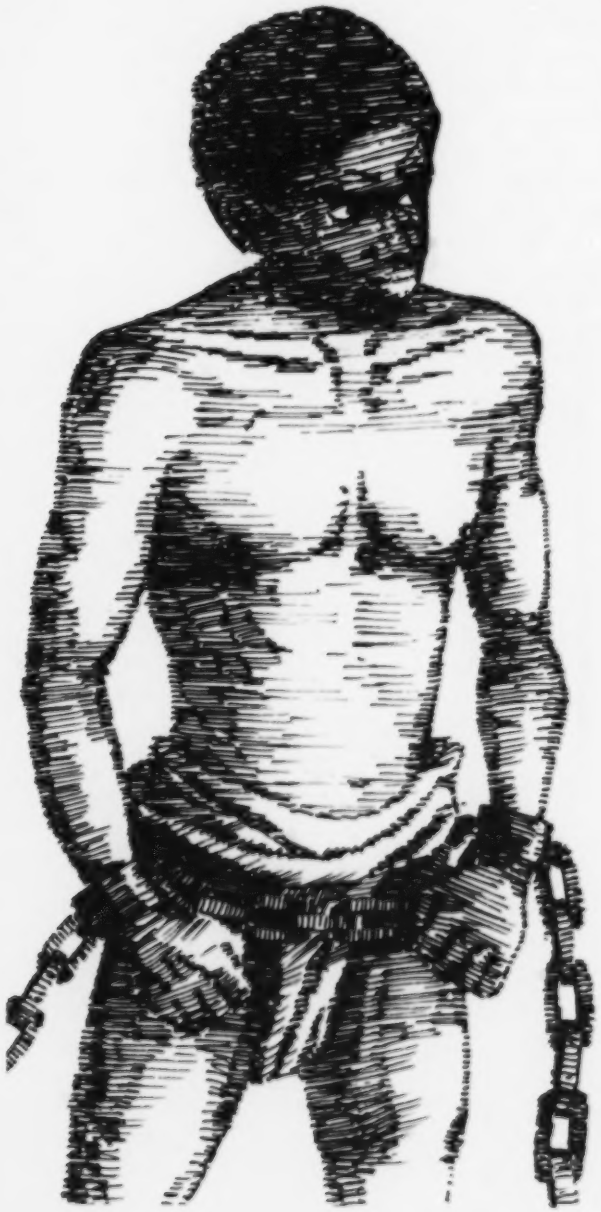
mangrove: tree indigenous to the tropics

bushland: land covered with low trees and bushes

READING

An African's Testimony

BY OLAUDAH EQUIANO



The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment which was soon converted into terror which I am yet at a loss to describe ... I was immediately handled, and tossed up to see if I were sound, by some of the crew, and I was now persuaded that I had got into a world of bad spirits and that they were going to kill me.

***

Their complexions too, differing so much from ours, their long hair and the language they spoke (which was very different from any I had ever heard) united to confirm me in this belief ... When I looked round the ship too, and saw a large furnace or copper[o] boiling, and a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances[o] expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate. Quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted.

When I recovered a little, I found some black people about me who I believed were some of those who brought me on board and had been receiving their pay ... I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces and long hair. They told me I was not ...

The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced ... a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died ... This deplorable situation was again aggravated by the galling[o] of the chains, now become insupportable, and

the filth of the necessary tubs[0] into which children often fell and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women and the groans of the dying, reduced it to a scene of horror almost inconceivable.

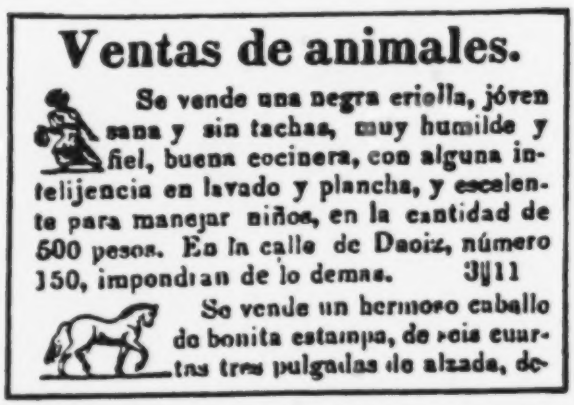
One day when we had a smooth sea and moderate wind, two of my wearied countrymen who were chained together (I was near them at the time) preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings and jumped into the sea. Immediately, another quite dejected fellow, who on account of his illness was suffered to be out of irons[0], also followed their example; and I believe many more would very soon have done the same if they had not been prevented by the ship's crew, who were instantly alarmed.

Those of us who were the most active were in a moment put down under the deck; and there was such a noise and confusion amongst the people of the ship as I never heard before, to stop her and get the boat out to go after the slaves. However, two of the wretches were drowned, but they got the other, and afterwards flogged him unmercifully for thus attempting to prefer death to slavery ...

At last we came in sight of the island of Barbados, at which the whites on board gave a great shout, and made many signs of joy to us. We did not know what to think of this, but as the vessel drew nearer we plainly saw the harbor and other ships of different kinds and sizes. We soon anchored amongst them off Bridge Town. Many merchants and planters[0] now came on board, though it was in the evening. They put is in separate parcels and examined us attentively. They also made us jump, and pointed to the land, signifying we were to go there. We thought by this we should be eaten by these ugly men, as they appeared to us ... There was much dread and trembling among us, and nothing but bitter cries to be heard all the night from these apprehensions, insomuch that at last the white people got some old slaves from the land to pacify us. They told us we were not to be eaten, but to work, and were soon to go on land, where we should see many of our country people. This report eased us much; and sure enough, soon after we landed, there came to us Africans of all languages.

We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age. As every object was new to me, everything I saw filled me with surprise. What struck me first was that the houses were built with bricks in stories, and were in every other respect different from those I had seen in Africa. I was still more astonished at seeing people on horseback. I did not know what this could mean; and indeed I thought these people full of nothing but magical arts[0] ...

On a signal given, such as the beat of a drum, the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of the parcel they like best ... In this manner, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again. I remember in the vessel in


Ventas de animales.
Se vende una negra criolla, jóven sana y sin tachas, muy humilde y fiel, buena cocinera, con alguna intelijencia en lavado y plancha, y escelente para manejar niños, en la cantidad de 500 pesos. En la calle de Daoiz, número 150, impondran de lo demas. 3|11
Se vende un hermoso caballo de bonita estampa, de seis cuartas tres pulgadas de alzada, de

Advertisement in a Cuban newspaper, 1839.

Sales of Animals

For sale, a Creole negro woman, young, healthy and without blemishes, very humble and faithful, good cook, with some knowledge of washing and ironing, and excellent for managing children, for the sum of 500 pesos. Further information at 150 Daoiz Street. For sale, a handsome horse of fine breeding, six spans and three inches ...

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each other again. I remember in the vessel in which I was brought over, in the men's apartment, there were several brothers who, in the sale, were sold in different lots; and it was very moving on this occasion to see their distress and hear their cries at parting.

O, ye nominal[9] Christians! Might not an African ask you, "Learned you this from your God, who says unto you, Do unto all men as you would men should do unto you? Is it not enough that we are torn from our country and friends to toil for your luxury and lust of gain? Must every tender feeling be likewise sacrificed to your avarice? Are the dearest friends and relations, now rendered more dear by their separation from their kindred, still to be parted from each other, and thus prevented from cheering the gloom of slavery with the small comfort of being together and mingling their sufferings and sorrows? Why are parents to lose their children, brothers their sisters, or husbands their wives? Surely this is a new refinement in cruelty, which, while it has no advantage to atone for it, thus aggravates distress and adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery."

-Abridged from: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by Himself 1789.*

Vocabulary

copper: large copper vat

countenance: face

galling: scraping

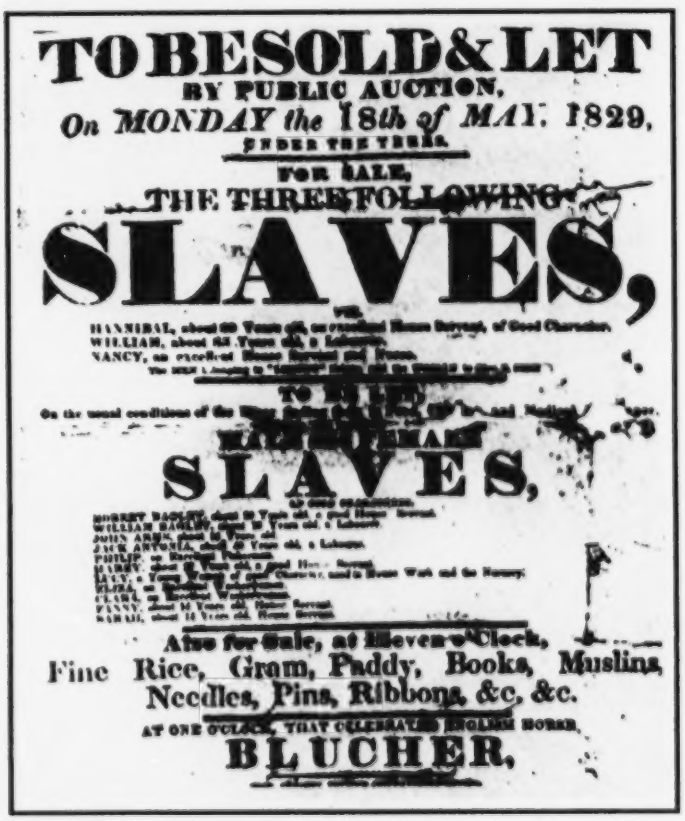
necessary tubs: tubs for human waste

irons: chains

planter: owner or manager of a Caribbean plantation

magical arts: witchcraft

nominal: in name only



TO BE SOLD & LET
BY PUBLIC AUCTION,
On MONDAY the 18th of MAY, 1829,
UNDER THE TREES,
FOR SALE,
THE THREE FOLLOWING
SLAVES,
SLAVES,
Also for Sale, at Eleven o'Clock,
Fine Rice, Gram, Paddy, Books, Muslins,
Needles, Pins, Ribbons, &c. &c.
AT ONE O'CLOCK, THAT CELEBRATED ENGLISH HORSE,
BLUCHER,

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READING

La balada de los dos abuelos

POR NICOLÁS GUILLÉN

Sombras que sólo yo veo,
me escoltan mis dos abuelos.

Lanza con punta de hueso,
tambor de cuero y madera:
mi abuelo negro.
Gorguera en el cuello ancho,
gris armadura guerrera:
mi abuelo blanco.

Pie desnudo, torso pétreo
los de mi negro;
pupilas de vidrio antártico
las de mi blanco.
Africa de selvas húmedas
y de gordos gongos sordos ...
—¡Me muero!
(Dice mi abuelo negro.)
Aguaprieta de caimanes,
verdes mañanas de cocos ...
—¡Me canso!
(Dice mi abuelo blanco.)
O velas de amargo viento,
galeón ardiendo en oro ...
—¡Me muero!
(Dice mi abuelo negro.)
O costas de cuello virgen
engañadas de abalorios ...
—¡Me canso!
(Dice mi abuelo blanco.)
¡O puro sol repujado,
preso en el aro del trópico;
o luna redonda y limpia
sobre el sueño de los monos!

¡Qué de barcos, qué de barcos!
¡Qué de negros, qué de negros!
¡Qué largo fulgor de cañas!
¡Qué látigo el del negrero!
Piedra de llanto y de sangre,
venas y ojos entreabiertos,
y madrugadas vacías,
y atardeceres de ingenio,
y una gran voz, fuerte voz
despedazando el silencio.
¡Qué de barcos, qué de barcos,
qué de negros!
Sombras que sólo yo veo,
me escoltan mis dos abuelos.

Don Federico me grita,
y Taita Facundo calla;
los dos en la noche sueñan,
y andan, andan.
Yo los junto.
— ¡Federico!
¡Facundo! Los dos se abrazan.
Los dos suspiran. Los dos
las fuertes cabezas alzan;
los dos del mismo tamaño,
bajo las estrellas altas;
los dos del mismo tamaño,
ansia negra y ansia blanca,
los dos del mismo tamaño
gritan, sueñan, lloran, cantan.
Sueñan, lloran, cantan.
Lloran, cantan.
¡Cantan!

–Reprinted from: Vol. 1 of *Obra poética 1920-1972*, collection of Guillén's poems edited by Angel Augier. (Havana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1972). Poem first published in 1934. English translation by C. Sunshine.

READING

Ballad of My Two Grandfathers

BY NICOLÁS GUILLÉN

Shadows that only I can see,
my two grandfathers go with me.

Lance[0] with a bone tip,
drum of hide and wood:
my black grandfather.
Ruff round his broad neck
grey warrior's armor:
my white grandfather.

Bare foot, stony torso,
those of my black one;
pupils of Antarctic glass,
those of my white one.
Africa of humid forests
and heavy muffled gongs ...
I am dying!
(Says my black grandfather.)
Waters dark with crocodiles,
green mornings of coconut palms ...
I am weary!
(Says my white grandfather.)
O sails of bitter wind,
galleon[0] burning gold ...
I am dying!
(Says my black grandfather.)
O coasts of virgin throats
cheated with glass trinkets ...
I am weary!
(Says my white grandfather.)
O pure sun of beaten gold,
imprisoned in the tropic's ring;
O moon so round and clear
above the sleep of monkeys!

So many ships, so many ships!
So many Blacks, so many Blacks!
Such tall splendor of sugar cane
So harsh the slave trader's whip!
Stone of tears and blood
Veins and eyes half-opened
empty dawns
and dusks at the sugar mill
and a great voice, strong voice
shattering the silence.
So many ships, so many ships,
so many Blacks!

Shadows that only I can see,
my two grandfathers go with me.

Don Federico shouts to me
and Taita[0] Facundo is silent;
and both dreaming through the night,
and journeying on and on.
I bring them together.
Federico!
Facundo! They embrace.
They sigh. They raise their proud heads;
both of the same size
beneath the high stars;
both of the same size
black anguish and white anguish,
both of the same size
they shout, dream, weep, sing.
Dream, weep, sing.
Weep, sing.
Sing!

Vocabulary

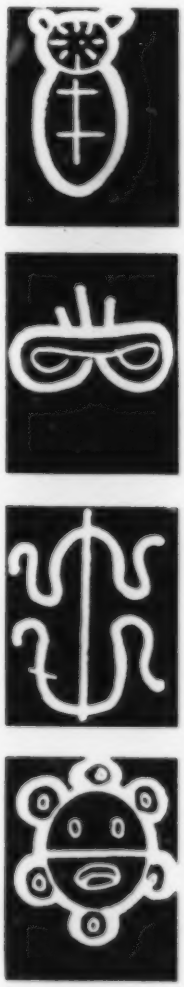
lance: spear

galleon: large sailing ship

Taita: affectionate term for father

PART THREE

WINNING FREEDOM



Throughout the Caribbean, the slaves resisted slavery. In the French colony of Saint Domingue, a victorious Black army overthrew the slave system and colonial rule. The country, renamed Haiti, became the first independent Caribbean nation.

Slave revolts and declining sugar profits finally forced the colonial governments to emancipate the slaves. Although legally free, the ex-slaves and their descendants had to struggle for full social and economic rights. In doing so, they relied on a strong sense of community, close ties to the land, and a belief in education as the means to a better life.

UNIT 4: African Resistance to Slavery

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Describe ways that slaves resisted slavery
2. Identify Nanny of the Maroons and explain why she is regarded as a national heroine of Jamaica
3. Analyze the causes, outcome and consequences of the Haitian revolution

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Who were the Maroons? Where did they live? How did the geography of these places help the Maroons? Locate on a map of Jamaica: cockpit country, parish of Portland, Blue mountains, Nanny Town, Moore Town, Accompong, Rio Grande River, John Crow Mountains.
2. How do we know about Nanny? For what achievements is she remembered? Are stories about her fact, or fiction? How can we ever judge whether stories we hear are factual? Can you think of any other historical legends like Nanny's story?
3. Why did the Maroons use "guerrilla" warfare against the slave owners? Could they have fought as an army in the conventional sense? Could they have used methods other than fighting to safeguard their freedom? Can you think of any modern parallels to the Maroon wars?
4. Why was Saint Domingue important to France in the 1700s? Who produced the wealth that Saint Domingue earned for France? Who benefitted from this wealth?
5. What factors account for the success of the Haitian slave revolt? Consider: a) geography, b) culture, c) leadership, d) the international situation.
6. In which countries near Haiti did slavery continue? How did the Haitian revolution influence events in these countries?
7. Is independence from colonial rule the same as freedom for all people in a country? Compare the American and Haitian revolutions in this regard.
8. Does your history or social studies text discuss slavery? What does it say about slave resistance? What is left out? Why may history books not always have told the full story of African resistance to slavery?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Each student chooses one of the following research and writing assignments:

- You are a Jamaican Maroon. Write a first-person account of your experiences, including your escape from the plantation, how your community lives, and its struggles against the slave owners. You will need to do more research on the Maroons (see Resources).

- Research the lives of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, African-American women who resisted slavery. Then write an imaginary exchange of letters between Nanny of the Maroons and one of these women.

2. Students role-play a meeting between Cudjoe and Nanny. They are discussing whether to sign a peace treaty with the English, with Cudjoe in favor and Nanny opposed. Each side should present clear reasons for its position.

3. Students read *The Black Jacobins* (see Resources). Each student chooses a point in Toussaint's career and writes a diary entry as if he or she were the Haitian leader. Examples: mobilizing a slave army, governing the island, negotiating with France, close to freezing in a French prison.

4. Assign a few students to do more research on slave revolts in the United States. How were they different from or similar to the Haitian revolution? What evidence can they find that the Haitian revolution influenced events in the U.S.?

▶ RESOURCES

1. Sources on the Maroons:

   - Mavis Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica* (Africa World Press, 1990).

   - Jean Fouchard, *The Haitian Maroons: Liberty or Death* (Blyden Press, 1981).

   - Lucille M. Mair, *The Rebel Woman in the British West Indies Under Slavery* (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1975).

   - Richard Price, ed., *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1979).

   - Carey Robinson, *The Fighting Maroons of Jamaica* (Kingston: Sangster's Books Stores, 1969).

2. There is a large literature on Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian revolution. A classic work is C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (Vintage Books, 1963; first published in 1936.) A recent book focusing on Haiti's impact on U.S. society is Alfred N. Hunt, *Haiti's Influence on Antebellum America: Slumbering Volcano in the Caribbean* (Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1988).

INTRODUCTION

African Resistance to Slavery

When history books describe the colonial era, they do not always tell the full story of how the slaves resisted slavery.

On the plantations slaves frequently refused to work, worked slowly, pretended to be ill, or purposely damaged estate property. All these were ways of resisting the hated slavery system.

In most of the Caribbean colonies, the slaves outnumbered the plantation owners. Slave uprisings were frequent. In most cases, colonial militias quickly crushed the revolt and executed the ringleaders. But some rebellions spread widely before they were defeated, and their leaders became Caribbean folk heroes. Historian Lennox Honychurch of Dominica describes these uprisings in "Revolt: How the Slaves Protested."

Many slaves escaped from the plantations. This was easiest in territories which had mountains (Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti) or dense forests (Guyana, Suriname) where the runaways could hide. In these protected areas, the Maroons, as the runaways were called, built independent communities. They waged guerrilla wars against the slave owners, raiding the plantations and helping more slaves escape.

Nanny, also called Ni, was a Jamaican Maroon leader. Along with Quao, she led the Maroons of eastern Jamaica in their fight against the slave owners. Cudjoe (Kojo) and his brother Accompong led the Maroons of western Jamaica. In 1739 Cudjoe signed a peace treaty with the British, agreeing to stop fighting in exchange for 1,500 acres of land and full freedom.

According to legend, Cudjoe's treaty with the British angered Nanny. Four months later, however, the western Maroons also made peace. Nanny received 500 acres of land for her people to live in freedom.

Nanny's community, Moore Town, still exists, along with other early Maroon settlements such as Charles Town and Accompong. They are inhabited by Maroon descendants today. Nanny is honored as a national heroine of Jamaica. Jamaican historian Lucille M. Mair tells her story.

The Haitian Revolution

In only one territory did the slaves revolt successfully: the French colony of Saint Domingue. By the late 1700s it was the biggest sugar producer in the Caribbean, and one of the most profitable colonies in the world. These profits were based on brutal slavery. Many Africans died after only a few years in Saint Domingue, and were replaced by new captives.

Saint Domingue was a large territory with many mountains and valleys where runaways could shelter. Most of the slaves in the colony had been born in Africa, and they remembered freedom. They had developed their own religion, voodoo, a mixture of African and Catholic beliefs, which helped to unify slaves on the different plantations.

While the slaves were relatively united, there were many divisions between different sections of the privileged classes. Whites and mulattoes (people of mixed race) were in constant conflict. The mulattoes resented the fact that although they were free, they were denied equality with whites.

In 1789 the French Revolution broke out, promising freedom and equality for all people. These ideas sent shock waves through Saint Domingue. The mulattoes argued that they too deserved equality, and in 1790 they re-

volted. The revolt was unsuccessful, but it set the stage for a larger event: the slave revolution led by Toussaint Louverture. Toussaint's slave army overthrew French rule in Saint Domingue and created the independent country of Haiti.

Haiti was the only place in the Americas where independence from colonial rule also brought the immediate end of slavery. This powerful example stood as a threat to the entire slave system, and helped bring about emancipation in other countries. Haitian scholar Michel-Rolph Trouillot explores this important aspect of the Haitian revolution.

A Maroon warrior.

Hunting the Maroons with dogs.

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READING

Revolt: How the Slaves Protested

BY LENNOX HONYCHURCH

There were generally two kinds of rebellion or revolt. Sudden, unplanned revolts occurred among the slaves of one estate and sometimes spread to a few neighboring estates. These were sparked by some particular piece of injustice or the actions of an inhumane master.

Then there were the planned revolts which were meant to involve all of the slaves on one island or district. Such rebellions were much more difficult to undertake because they depended on the unity of slaves on all plantations. The ideal of these rebellions was to overthrow the whites and take complete control of the government. Only in the French colony of St. Domingue did such a revolt succeed. This was the Haitian Revolution of 1791.

Usually revolts were started by strong and respected leaders who were able to gain the confidence of their fellow slaves. This demanded great qualities, because the slaves had to be persuaded to sacrifice their lives and face harsh punishment if the rebellion failed. Tacky in Jamaica and Coffy in Berbice[0] (Guyana) were two leaders of slave uprisings during the 18th century.

Coffy's rebellion in Berbice was an outstanding case. Coffy was a self-educated slave who in 1763 led 3,833 slaves to rebel and seek revenge against cruel treatment and shortages of provisions. Coffy organized the confused groups, drilled soldiers and put gangs to work in the fields. He planned to control all of Berbice and for a time was virtually the ruler of the colony. He negotiated with the Dutch governor, van Hoogenheim, by letter. "The causes of this war," wrote Coffy, "is that there have been many masters who have not given their slaves their due ..." He listed the masters and demanded that they leave the colony.

But while Coffy wrote, van Hoogenheim was collecting ships and soldiers to sail up the Berbice River. After bitter fighting at Dageraad the rebels were defeated ... Those who were captured were tortured and executed. Coffy is now a national hero of Guyana.

The Maroons

The planters called those who escaped "runaways," as they had run away from their system, but they were more popularly known as "Maroons." In the early years of Spanish settlement on the mainland of South and Central America, slaves had escaped into the jungles. Slaves also escaped from the French and Dutch plantations in the Guianas[0] and formed their own small social groups.

Slaves who escaped from plantations on the islands lived a far more risky life. Whereas the Maroons of the mainland could wander hundreds of miles into the Amazon and Orinoco[0] jungles, the forested areas were limited on an island. On some smaller islands like Barbados and the Leewards[0], there was simply nowhere to escape to. Therefore, the main Maroon societies of the Caribbean islands developed in the Greater Antilles[0], Jamaica and the mountainous Windward Islands[0]. In Jamaica, a confusing area of jumbled hills and gullies known as the "Cockpit Country" was a favorite hideout for the Maroons.

Although they were free from slavery, life in the Maroon camps was by no means easy. Their numbers were small and there was a scarcity of weapons, ammunition, food and clothing. Maroons were always on the run from militiamen, regular troops and special forest rangers armed with dogs.

During the years of plantation slavery their

ranks were increased by rebel slaves and runaways led by the toughest and boldest fugitives. At times they raided plantations and took away other slaves with them. Each island had its famous Maroon leaders. In Jamaica there were men like Cudjoe and Quao, in Dominica, Balla and Jacko, and in St. Vincent, Chatoyer and Duvalle, who were Black Caribs.[6]

While the Maroons were active on the islands, they practiced forms of guerrilla warfare. This baffled the European soldiers who had been trained for organized military tactics on open ground, as was the method in the eighteenth century. Sniping and ambushing from cliffs and trees was how the Maroons fought. Signals were sent by blowing conch[6] shells and a cow horn called *abeng*, the sound from which carried for miles through the hills with a series of notes signifying secret messages and warnings.

–Adapted from: Lennox Honychurch, *The Caribbean People (Book Two)* (Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1979).

Vocabulary

Berbice: formerly a Dutch colony; today part of Guyana, an independent country

the Guianas: Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana

Amazon and Orinoco: rivers in northeastern South America

Leewards: chain of small islands stretching from the Virgin Islands to Montserrat

Greater Antilles: Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico

Windward Islands: Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Dominica

Black Caribs: group of people resulting from intermarriage between escaped slaves and native Caribs.

conch: shellfish with a large, spiral shell

Blowing the abeng, *the signal for revolt.*

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READING

Nanny of the Maroons

BY LUCILLE M. MAIR

The Maroons of Jamaica, like many other Afro-Caribbean groups, carry their past in their heads, and can relate in detail events of historic significance to the growth of their community. The story of Nanny is one of the most faithfully preserved in the rich body of Black Caribbean culture.

Nanny's time and place of birth, whether Jamaica or in Africa, is not clear. What is certain, however, is that she was of Ashanti[0] origin, and was a free woman who never personally experienced slavery. She was the sister of Cudjoe, the equally renowned Maroon leader; she was married to a Maroon of considerable prestige among their people, but a man of peace who played no active part in military affairs.

She had no children of her own but was revered as the mother of her people. The community of old Nanny Town, covering over 600 acres of land in the Back Rio Grande[0] valley, was probably founded in the 1690s, and was controlled by Nanny when the English first found it in the 1730s. It was a highly organized free community: under Nanny's leadership the position of women and children was greatly respected, their safety and dignity always receiving primary consideration during periods of fighting. After the first English attempt of 1730 to capture the town, "Grannie" Nanny had the women and children evacuated and settled in Girls' Town and Women's Town in the John Crow Mountains[0], on lands which subsequently became Moore Town.

In the fierce encounters between Blacks and whites which took place in those mountains throughout the years of the first Maroon war, Nanny's genius dominated the fighting strategies of the guerrillas. She did not herself take part in the fighting, but blessed and directed the campaigns, with the Maroon horn, the Abeng, as her effective means of communication.

Her role was very much in the tradition of Ashanti priests/priestesses and magicians who performed essential functions in African warfare. Such magico-religious leaders customarily advised on the best time for waging war. They gave warriors charms to protect them from injury, and participated with the military commanders in rituals designed to weaken the enemy.

Nanny became celebrated as a great worker of magic. In the words of a nineteenth century Maroon chief:

> Nanny had more science in fighting than even Cudjoe ... After the signing of the treaty, Nanny say that she show them science. She told fifty soldiers to load their guns and then fire on her. She folds back her hands between her legs and catches the fifty shots. This was called Nantucompong. Nanny takes her back to catch the balls.

Maroons believed strongly in these supernatural gifts. She was supposed also to keep a huge cauldron boiling, without the use of fire, at the foot of the precipice where Nanny Town stood. Maroon history has it that when curious soldiers and militiamen came close to inspect this freak of nature, they fell into the cauldron and were suffocated.

Of all the Black resistance leaders of her time, Nanny was foremost among those who resolved never to come to terms with the English. She infected her followers with this determination, and their aggressiveness became legendary. It was her people who made that epic trans-island trek in 1735 to join the Leeward Maroons[0]. But they were too

Artist's impression of Nanny of the Maroons.

militant for the guerrillas of the west, who were moving towards a policy of peaceful coexistence with whites. Cudjoe, the Leeward chief, accused the Windward Maroons[0] of being cruel and insolent to the English, and he probably feared that they were too high-spirited and independent to accept his authority. Hence their eastward return march in 1737.

In that same year Nanny took a solemn pledge on the brow of Pumpkin Hill that she and her people would continue to fight the English raiding parties to the death.

She greeted with bitterness the news in 1739 of Cudjoe's peace treaty with the English, and ordered the execution of the soldier who carried her the message. Reluctantly she accepted the peace terms for her own people, but it is significant that as the men signed the truce, the women stood by wearing defiantly round their ankles as ornaments the teeth of the white soldiers who had been killed in battle.

After the conclusion of the truce, the Windward Maroons split into two groups. One went closer to the coast to Crawford Town with Quao as their chief, and the other to New Nanny Town (now Moore Town), under Nanny's leadership. On August 5, 1740, her land patent[0] was approved, duly granting to "the said Nanny and the people now residing with her, their heirs and assigns a certain parcel of land containing five hundred acres in the parish of Portland ..." She continued to rule her people in peace time, exercising a unifying influence for many years on the two Maroon groups of Portland.

She lies buried on a hill in Moore Town under a great mound marked by river stones. The spot, called Bump Grave, is sacred ground. It remains as an enduring monument not only to the remarkable Nanny, but to spirit of all of those Black women of the New World, who, throughout the oppression of slavery, played their many parts in reaffirming that woman, like man, is born free.

Abridged from: Lucille Mathurin Mair, *The Rebel Woman in the British West Indies Under Slavery* (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1975).

Vocabulary

Ashanti: a West African people living in modern Ghana

Rio Grande: river in eastern Jamaica

John Crow mountains: mountains in eastern Jamaica

Leeward Maroons: Maroons of western Jamaica

Windward Maroons: Maroons of eastern Jamaica

patent: official document securing a right

READING

The Haitian Revolution and its Impact on the Americas

BY MICHEL-ROLPH TROUILLOT

On July 14, 1789, the storming of the Bastille launched the French revolution. A year later, many white colonists in the French colony of Saint Domingue were worried about the news from France. Yet most did not doubt the "passivity" of their slaves. One colonist, a Monsieur La Barre, wrote reassuringly to his relatives in France:

> I am telling you about our troubles here, so that misleading news does not trouble your mind. There is no movement among our Negroes. They are not even thinking about it. They are very quiet and submissive ... We sleep with our doors and windows open.

La Barre was wrong to sleep with his doors open. A year after he wrote the letter, the northern region of Saint Domingue was in flames, and 100,000 slaves had joined the revolution.

The Haitian revolution was the first and the most spectacular emergence of freedom in the Americas. It is the only case where the decisive action of the **slaves themselves** ended slavery. It is also the only case where the end of slavery brought with it the emergence of an independent nation with political power in the hands of the former slaves and their descendants.

In the late 18th century, Saint Domingue was the most profitable colony in the Americas. It was the world's leading producer of sugar and coffee. The price was paid in human lives, by the slaves who worked on the plantations. So many slaves died from hard labor, illness and cruel treatment that the population could not maintain itself naturally. As a result, the slave owners had to constantly replenish the supply. Between 1764 and 1791, the French planters of Saint Domingue imported more than 300,000 slaves from Africa.

Not all of them accepted their fate. Many fled to the woods, becoming Maroons. Others, in smaller numbers, envisioned a total overthrow of the slave system, and attempted to poison the slave owners.

When the French revolution caused turmoil in France and its colonies, the slaves saw their chance. The uprising began on August 22, 1791. Within a few days most of the north of Saint Domingue was in revolt. Sugar plantations were destroyed, and hundreds of whites were killed or fled the island.

Two years of confusion followed, during which rebel slaves, planters, free blacks and French officials recovered from their shock and evaluated their forces. Spain and Britain took advantage of the situation to attack Saint Domingue, forging and breaking alliances with groups of rebels. The French government tried to salvage its colony by offering conditional freedom to the slaves. But it was too little, too late.

During those two years, a slave known as Toussaint Louverture had been formulating strategy and tactics. On August 29, 1793, he issued a call to arms:

> I am Toussaint Louverture ... I have undertaken vengeance. I want liberty and equality to reign in Saint Domingue. Unite to us, brothers, and fight with us for the same cause.

From that point on, history became legend. Toussaint allied with the Spaniards to beat the French, then joined the French to beat the British. He expelled three white administrators, negotiated with the United States, and made himself *general en chef*, the de facto ruler of Saint Domingue. He also promulgated its first independent constitution.

Toussaint Louverture

Napoleon, who had just seized power in France, sent a formidable army to recapture Saint Domingue and restore slavery. Eighty-six warships carrying 22,000 soldiers from the best French regiments invaded the island. Toussaint's forces were weakened, and he was treacherously kidnapped and exiled to France, where he died in captivity.

But freedom did not die with Toussaint. The Black general is reported to have said after his capture, "In overthrowing me, the French have only cut the stem of the freedom tree in Saint Domingue. But the tree will grow again, so deep and strong are its roots."

Indeed, the tree was not dead. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, a former slave and follower of Toussaint, along with Henri Christophe, a free black, and Alexandre Petion, a mulatto, reorganized the revolutionary forces. The second phase of the war began in 1802. The French troops suffered defeat after defeat. At one point, Napoleon reportedly asked an officer who had just returned from the colony if a thousand new soldiers would enable France to restore slavery in Saint Domingue. The officer replied: "Not a thousand. Thousands ... thousands ... thousands ... and then, thousands again."

In less than a year, the former slaves regained control of most of the colony. Dessalines led his army from victory to victory. On January 1, 1804, he proclaimed the independence of Haiti.

At the time of the Haitian revolution, slavery was widespread in the Americas. It existed from Canada to Chile, and was most important in the Caribbean colonies, the southern United States, and Brazil. It had survived as an institution for almost 300 years.

The Haitian revolution was the beginning of the end for slavery in the western hemisphere. Although slavery was created for economic purposes and maintained through the use of violence, it also carried a mystique. The Haitian revolution broke this spell, proving that freedom **could** be won. Everywhere, slaves became more daring, slave owners more fearful. Slave revolts and conspiracies increased, in part because of Haiti's example.

Migrants from Saint Domingue helped spread the message of freedom. During and after the revolutionary war, many Saint Domingue planters fled to the United States, sometimes taking their slaves with them. Many settled in the area which is now Louisiana, and in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk and Charleston. Others went to neighboring Caribbean territories including Guadeloupe, Martinique, Jamaica and Cuba.

In 1795 there were two major slave revolts in Cuba, and one each in Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Grenada and Venezuela. In Louisiana, the famous revolt of Pointe Coupee involved migrants from Saint Domingue. Afterwards, the state's governor forbade further immigration of Blacks from Saint Domingue into Louisiana. The largest slave rebellion in U.S.

history, which took place in Louisiana in 1811, was led by a man from Saint Domingue. And in Charleston, South Carolina, testimony at the trial that followed the Denmark Vesey conspiracy in 1822 showed the influence of the Haitian revolution on both slaves and planters.

These revolts and others helped bring about the eventual abolition of slavery in the Americas. Britain abolished the slave trade (but not slavery) in 1807. Holland was the first European country to abolish slavery in its American colonies, in 1818. Emancipation was proclaimed in British Guiana in 1827; in Mexico in 1829; and in the British Caribbean islands in 1834. In the Danish and French colonies abolition took place in 1848; in Colombia in 1851; in Venezuela in 1854; in Peru in 1860. The slaves in the United States were freed in 1865. Puerto Rico followed in 1873, Cuba in 1880. Brazil came last, in 1888.

Capture of Toussaint by the general of the French expedition

In some cases Haiti, now ruled by former slaves, actively attempted to help others win freedom. The Haitian constitution of 1805 provided that any Black person stepping on Haitian soil became a free Haitian citizen, regardless of previous status and origins. Jean-Jacques Dessalines also called on African-Americans in the United States, both slave and free, to migrate to Haiti.

In 1822 the Haitians invaded neighboring Santo Domingo and freed the slaves there, a unique case of slaves being emancipated by former slaves. The Haitian government also helped Simon Bolivar in the wars to free the Latin American colonies from Spain. It did so in order to see slavery abolished in the liberated territories, although Bolivar did not always keep his promise of immediate abolition.

In many territories, abolition did not mean immediate freedom. In some places years passed between the emancipation proclamation and the actual freeing of the slaves. President Lincoln's proclama-

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tion of January 1, 1863 had no enforceable effect on the status of American slaves until the end of the Civil War. In the British Caribbean colonies, abolition was followed by a four-year "apprenticeship" period during which the slaves were forced to continue working on the plantations.

One reason for this was that forces outside the plantation economies usually imposed abolition. Industrialists, humanitarians and government officials wanted to end the slave system, but they also wanted to protect the planters' interests to a degree. In Haiti, by contrast, the most important abolitionists were the slaves themselves.

Haiti also stood alone as a country where national independence brought a change in the old order. In the United States, by contrast, once the colonists won independence from Britain, it was business as usual. Slaves remained slaves, property owners remained owners. The situation was similar in Latin America after the Spanish colonies broke free of Spain's rule. But in Haiti, the revolution changed the structure of the society, not just its relationship to a colonial power.

The period from 1776 to 1843 is sometimes called the age of revolutions. It included the North American revolution, the French revolution, and the rise of the European and Latin American nation-states. But few historians have recognized the significance of the revolution in Saint Domingue. Indeed, many textbooks refer to it as a mere "rebellion" or "revolt."

To understand the history of the Americas we must pay tribute to the achievements of Haiti. The French revolutionaries sought freedom, and the North American colonists sought independence, but the Haitian slaves won both. At a time when slavery went unchallenged elsewhere, and national independence placed control in the hands of rich property owners, Haiti was the first country in the Americas where freedom meant freedom for everyone.

Adapted from: Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "The Haitian Revolution and its Impact on the Americas," address to the Third World Plantation Conference, Lafayette, Louisiana, Oct. 27, 1989.

UNIT 5: Emancipation and Free Village Life

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Explain strategies of the former slaves to become self-reliant after emancipation
2. Visualize daily life in the "free villages"
3. Recognize that abuses of slavery were not ended by abolition; ex-slaves had to fight for full rights

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What might a freed slave do on the first morning of freedom? Then what? What would be the most important things he or she would have to deal with? What might happen?
2. After emancipation, why did the freed slaves want to acquire land? Why was it difficult for them to do so? How did they overcome these obstacles?
3. In what ways did Samuel Smith's life change when his family left Jonas Estate to live in Freeman's Ville?
4. What aspects of life in Antigua did not change after emancipation?
5. In what ways does changing the law solve problems that people face? When is changing the law not enough? Consider changes in the laws affecting civil rights for African-Americans.
6. How did the villagers take care of illness? What medicinal uses for herbs do you know? Why do you think that women rather than men were the doctors?
7. Is Samuel Smith's story history? Why or why not? In what ways does it help us understand the Caribbean past?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Divide the class into small groups and give each group a sheet of newsprint. Students are to divide the paper into three columns, labeled PROBLEMS, POSSIBLE CAUSES, and SOLUTIONS. As they read Papa Sammy's story, they fill in their chart with examples. For instance:

   Problem: Schools had no writing books

   Possible causes: Books not manufactured in the colony? Government unwilling to spend money on education?

   Solution: Used slates and a chalk-like stone

2. Students construct a model from clay, paper or other materials of a

free village in Antigua based on the reading. **or** Each student draws a scene described in Samuel Smith's narrative. **or** Several students write and perform a short skit based on a situation in the narrative.

3. Divide the class into four teams, each assuming one of the following identities:

- Slaves on a sugar plantation in Antigua
- The plantation owner, who lives in England off the profits from sugar and runs the estate through managers
- Members of the abolition movement in London
- British industrialists, owners of early manufacturing plants

Ask students to imagine that it is 1830, four years before the Emancipation Act. Stage a debate on the question of whether slavery should be abolished. Each group should prepare by investigating and thinking about its role in the system, considering also what action, if any, they can threaten to take to resolve the issue in their favor. A helpful source for students and teachers will be Eric Williams' *Capitalism & Slavery* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1944).

4. Just as women were the doctors in the free villages, women provided primary health care for many years in the United States. Students can (1) research the history of women's role in medicine in the U.S. and (2) develop an analysis of why women's roles shifted from those of primary healers, such as doctors, to support personnel such as nurses or social workers.

5. Students read Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (Harper & Row, 1990. First published in 1937.) Compare post-emancipation Black life in the United States to Samuel Smith's experience.

▶ RESOURCES

1. Keithlyn B. Smith and Fernando C. Smith, *To Shoot Hard Labour: The Life and Times of Samuel Smith, an Antiguan Workingman 1877-1982.* An Antiguan man recounts his family's history from emancipation to the present. The narrative conveys the richness of Caribbean folk culture. Edan's Publishers, P.O. Box 872, Station A, Scarborough, Ontario M1K 5C8, Canada.

2. Victor S. Reid, *New Day*. A novel of post-emancipation Jamaica, set against the backdrop of the 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion.

INTRODUCTION

Emancipation and Free Village Life

The Emancipation Act of 1833 formally freed the slaves in the British colonies. But real freedom was still denied. In all the islands except Antigua, the slaves were forced to continue working on the plantations, a so-called "apprenticeship" which was supposed to last six years. The slaves protested and in 1838 the British government cut short the apprenticeship system. Full freedom was granted on August 1, 1838.

One of the first concerns of the newly-freed slaves was to reunite families broken up by slavery. Samuel Smith, born in Antigua in 1877, was the great-grandson of a slave. He learned his family's history from his grandmother, Countis, and later retold it to two of his grandsons. They recorded their grandfather's recollections as a book, *To Shoot Hard Labour*. "Papa Sammy" recounts how his great-great-grandmother, Rachel, and her daughters brought the family back together after the end of slavery.

Once free, the former slaves naturally wanted to quit the plantations, but this was often difficult. The planters used various tactics to ensure that the ex-slaves would have to continue working for them. They began charging rent for the huts where the former slaves lived—the only homes most of them knew. If they wanted to stay in their houses, they would have to keep working on the estates for a cheap wage. The planters also pressured the colonial government to sell land only in large lots, so that the ex-slaves could not afford to buy.

But the former slaves were determined to become self-reliant. Gradually land became available, as many planters sold or abandoned their estates and returned to England. Groups of former slaves pooled their savings and bought land together, or simply moved onto abandoned land as "squatters." In some cases, missionaries—especially Baptists, Methodists and Moravians—bought old estates and divided the land up among the freed slaves.

Artist: Vernal Reuben

In this way hundreds of "free villages" were established. People in these villages grew crops to eat and to sell. As independent small farmers, they no longer depended entirely on the plantation owners. Most continued to do some estate work, but they now had more power to bargain for fair wages.

After emancipation, Samuel Smith's family lived on Jonas Estate for ten more years, enduring treatment almost as harsh as during slavery. Finally they succeeded in leaving the estate to begin new lives in Freeman's Ville, a free village.

READING

It Wasn't Just the Doctoring We Have To Do for Ourself

BY SAMUEL SMITH
RECORDED BY KEITHLYN B. SMITH AND
FERNANDO C. SMITH

One of the happiest moments in the life of my family took place in 1888. In that year we built our own house at Freeman's Ville, the second village put up after freedom come.

My grandmother told me that at first people called the village Franchie Bell, but the people that live there changed the name because they were always rebellious. (She also used to talk about Liberta Village, the first village that the nega people[0] set up after freedom in 1834, and how that village got its name from the word liberty. The people pick up the word from the American way of talking about freedom.)

When we start to build our house a Methodist minister, one Rev. James, helped my father to get some second-hand materials from Jonas Estate. The materials, together with some local wood, was put together to construct the house.

At last we were under our own roof and enjoying, for the first time, family privacy. Estate life was behind our back at last.

My parents set about the task of settling down and bringing us up the best way possible. The open vice that my mother fear so much on the estates was not displayed in the village. The village was indeed a quiet place.

We use to go to the Methodist church school at Freeman's Ville. There was no writing books in them days. We learnt to write on slates with a chalk-like stone we called aboo. And when it was possible my mother would send us to church on Sundays. The village was of no size to speak of. There were the Methodist church and some three or four houses that belong to the church, but the village itself was just some twelve houses.

Building houses in the village were slow back in them days. It was real hard to get a house. You have to have proper luck to be able to get into village life. I remember that some fourteen months happen to pass after our house was built before another family was able to settle in at Freeman's Ville.

You have to keep in mind that in them days there was nobody to speak up for us. Nobody. It seem to me that there was not one single person that have the right to talk up or to represent anybody. No, we lived and worked back then as massa[0] say.

There was widespread hunger, there were starvation. I am not lying: there was not a single one of us that did not suffer terrible hunger. Now we wanted to work the land that was not in use so we would not have to bear that hunger. There was mass unemployment and the wages for the ones that was lucky enough to have a job was just a pittance.

We were bound and determined to work the land. Back then, the planters was very well aware that no race work harder than we. If we could work the land, then in process of time we would become self-sufficient or we would be in control of things.

But the bakkra[0] knew very well that was the main artery to independence for we. They was also well aware that if we have land we will have no need to work cheap for them. You see, if we have our own land, this will be the biggest threat to the British Empire, so all the land was massa's own; nega man own nothing. From what I know, the British attitude to any and all of the ex-slaves anywhere was exactly the same as far as the land goes. Them never want to work the land. All the feast and fuss them behave with amount to one thing; them afraid black people come to boss them.

But as time pass, them have to let us work

the land. For sure, though, the Englishmen was very careful how they go about that. Whenever we get permission to farm, the bakkra remain the full owners of the produce. Not less than half of the area was to be planted in sugar cane. We could cultivate, plant and care the field, but the planters keep the right to decide when would the reaping take place. Them also have the right to say if the persons that worked in the fields should get any of the produce.

As time pass, things gradually change. More planters continue to go back to England and, step by step, a larger portion of land became available. There was room for us to build up the villages.

But although we would have some land, the lack of building materials and money seriously hinder us. You see, before going back to England, most of the bakkra would go and tear down some of the old estate houses that belong to them. They would sell the materials second-hand to the people and them materials would sure be in great demand. Now that stuff was far from being enough to provide for the great need of the people that wish to leave the estates, so there was always a serious rush by the people to get the torn down materials. Sometimes the planters would stop the public sale and sell privately to the chosen ones. People that did not have the fortunate position to buy the second-hand wood, but were determined to move away from the estates, would build the houses from wood from the caps[0] and from trash and mud. We call them wattle and daub houses. For many years most of the houses on the island was comprise of wattle and daub.

Even when you got your house built, you still have to reckon with natural ills: hurricanes, earthquakes and drought. The wattle and daub houses and most of the ones built by second-hand materials could hardly stand up to hurricanes or the gale force winds.

I think severe drought were more prevalent than hurricanes or gale force winds. The way it was, you see, the planters usually would use the drought as an excuse to cut the wages—and the pay was already very low—and people trying to get a job would find it rough because the planters was deliberately refusing to hire people.

Food was always hard to come by, but this situation would be severely worsen by the drought so hunger and starvation was more common then. Many of our people serve time in the jail house or got licks[0] for using the bakkra's food or water. Even during the dry weather we could not use the pond water without permission. Life was indeed sheer misery.

Some time close to the end of the century, Joe Martin, a cousin of mine from Freeman's Ville, was charge for stealing a bucket of water from Old Pond at North Sound Estate. That same year, we face a severe drought and

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water for the village was plenty scarce. Now Joe went to the North Sound head planter to make up the case. Joe knew that he could not escape prison if the case be heard by the magistrate and also there was still the possibility for him to get the order for licks in prison. He therefore decide to be whipped by the planter at North Sound. Well, them maltreat Joe. He nearly dead and he did not catch himself for a long time. Joe lived to a ripe old age but didn't get rid of the scars that he receive from them blows.

The food situation did not get better. The food sent from England was not for us but for the planters and them families. The leftovers was sold to people, but most of the times that food were unfit for human consumption. The rice, the flour and cornmeal was generally full of worms. We would use a sifter to separate the worms but the smell of the goods was usually unpleasant.

Somehow we try and manage. The relish usually used were saltfish[0], shad[0] and other pickled meat, and tango[0]—when we could get it. Cassie[0], paw-paw[0], spinach, pusley[0], and other vegetables was also added together with the shad, fish or meat, as the case may be. Corn was also eaten very often. We would roast it, boil it or make it into hashum by roasting and grinding it with sugar.

Ground provision[0] such as potatoes, yams[0], cassavas[0] and pumpkins—when the pumpkins was available—was use in many different ways. Potatoes at most times was boiled or roasted and eaten with shad and saltfish. At other times, we would take it and make potato soup or pudding. Maybe you will not believe this, but one piece of shad use to serve the family for a week.

Cassava are of two kinds, the bitter and the sweet. The sweet cassava is boiled and eaten with any kind of relish[0]. The bitter cassava is poisonous if you boil and eat it. It will cause you severe pain in the stomach and vomiting. That kind of cassava have to be grated, and the liquid along with certain amount of starch, taken off. Then you dry out the flour and make it into bread or bamboola[0]. The starch was used in the washing of clothes. People clothes sure use to be stiff on them.

The coconut was one of the most important fruits in them days. It was for making coconut tarts, sugar cakes, coconut dumplings, coconut syrup and other tasty foods. With our home-made coconut oil we use to fry up dumplings and meat. It was also for greasing the hair and skin. That oil was also good for cruffie skins[0], stiff joints and chest colds.

Now, Antigua is not blessed with wild life, so that kind of meat usually was scarce. The better off villagers will have them pig and will keep that pig until Christmas. But it was tango or no meat at all for long periods. There were not many fishermen at that time, and the few that were there could not explore the sea to the full. That was because there was a lack of proper boats and nets, so you couldn't get much sea food to speak of. Sometimes we would set out crab boxes and large crowds of young men usually go searching for crabs and cockles[0]. Fungi[0] with crab was a kind of na-

Artist: Rini Templeton

tional dish for us. Mind you, many times it was crab alone on the table.

We make nearly everything we used. Our coffee was from jumbie beads[0], wild tamarinds[0] and warri seeds[0]. The seeds were all roast and grounded together. People don't worry with that coffee today, but it was the best coffee. And there was also all kinds of plants we use to make tea—fever grass, cassie balsam, lime bush, noyo-seige, cattle tongue, soursop and mother sydril. Trible grape, old man beard, French thyme, sweet mint, baricada bush, porter bush, jugger man bush, man-pan tree, long grass, blackberry, polly pojer and St. John bush.

Nearly every grown adult have them pipe to smoke, made from bamboo stalks. The home-grown tobacco leaves was left to dry out and smoked in place of the good tobacco because, in them days, hardly any money was there to buy the imported kind. That tobacco tree was precious to us.

You might be surprised to know this, but we didn't get pipe-borne water in the villages for many, many years. You couldn't collect water from a thatch-roof[0] house and there was no large containers for storing drinking water back then. Ponds was made by the villagers to provide them with water. The catchment made to provide the people of Freeman's Ville with water was named after the man that select the spot, a man by the name of Punchey. Up to today the area is still known as Punchey.

As time change everything, the planters begin to let their workers use the estate pond water from time to time. But this did not put an end to the problem of getting water. The pond water was very unclean because plenty crapaud[0] was living in them pond. You see, animal too usually pass their urine and waste while drinking water. Now that kind of water was always dangerous for health. We gladly drink that water, though, nothing else min dey[0].

Now the bakk.'a was always afraid of diseases. Still and all, they took quite a long time before they did anything to clean up the place. While our people was struggling to make the new and independent village life, many of them dead. Typhoid fever, malaria, yellow fever, ulcer, T.B., hunger, tetanus, and other deadly diseases was killing a lot of our people. It was common for a family to have more than one person die in a short time. And quite a few planter was dying too.

Disease was indeed a problem. Now, very few trained doctors was around and they were not interested to attend to poor black people, so we just have to make up our minds to live without them and use our own means to make life more easy. For example, there was always

Artist: Michelle Gibbs

a local village doctor. Now whether it was by accident or by design, I don't know, but the local village doctor was always a woman. I can't remember even one man that know very much local remedy. These women doctors knew the local remedy for all kinds of things, the best bush for the particular sickness. Some people was cured, others wasn't. The important thing was them women sure try.

Them did their best to help.

The bush syrup, for colds and so on, was made up of mangy dagger, eucalyptus, sage and cattle tongue leaves along with bark mixed up with sugar. Sissle, bamboo bush and French thyme was also capital for colds. To clean the blood you would take and boil white head broom and law lavington bush together with bitter mint and inflammation bush. The sixty-six bush was also a good blood cleaner. And tizan bush tea and tanbrana root water were use by men to keep them cross[0]. We indeed use to love and cherish them bush.

The women also knew to boil up the root of the powerful doctor dull-dull bush for the painful monthly things. And later it was found that maiden blush bush was good for blood pressure and headaches and that brackish jelly water will serve for rheumatism and arthritis.

The leaves of the large pain killer tree at North Sound Estate was to cure pain. Whoever pick the leaves must pay the tree, either with a coin or a ten-penny nail[0]. People say that if you did not pay the tree, the leaves would be of no effect and the pain would not get better. Back then the people truly believe in that story and pay the tree at all times. The nails and coins are still there for all to see.

The best village doctor also have the knowledge to refit dislocated ribs back into the right place. The bakkra doctors wasn't competent in this. Them never could do that job better than the women that serve as village doctors. Them women do everything to lessen the sufferings of our poor people. "There is a tree to cure every sickness and a tree to suit every purpose"—that was their belief. God bless them.

Our people also was suffering from toothache. It was the normal thing for the face to be twist out of shape because of bad teeth. False teeth was not around back then. The way things was, we hardly even hear of dentists. We used to use charcoal and peas bush to clean the teeth. I was lucky. I never had bad teeth in my young days. The first time I ever go and see a dentist, I was close to eighty years old.

It wasn't just the doctoring that we have to do for ourself. In those days, except for the moon and stars, there was no lights. Quite early in the evening the kerosene lamps would be put out for fear of fire. We would make our lamps called dunkey pumps.

And for many years nobody had idea of what a clock was like. It was the moon or stars to judge the time at nights or early mornings and we have to judge the daylight hour by a stick or the length of our shadow. But you know, them two planets fool us many times.

I remember that one of the big differences between life on the estates and village life was that we could play our own music as hard as we want—something that was strictly forbidden on the estates. (But even with this difference, you better have manners towards the older folks. Parents used to beat them picknee[0] for the slightest thing. You could not whistle in front of an older person because that was rude. Even the older children used to beat up on the little ones. I believe this come down from slavery times and that our folks just carry it on. Nowadays people just love them picknee and treat them like king and queen.) Anyway, we would just make whatever noise we like and beat the African rhythm whenever we want. Most of the times we made music with pieces of iron or tin pans and sometimes with the flamboyant shack shack.[0]

We built tents and held singing meetings, concerts and dances. The tents was also to keep night schools. If you did not get the opportunity to go to school, and had an interest to learn something, you would flock to the tents because, you see, after village life start to develop our people was desperate to learn how to read.

Now some of the finest speeches and keen-

est speaking competitions would take p[illegible]ce at the singing meetings. There was also a singing competition at those meetings. The speakers usually would speak on topics from the Bible mixed with verses of famous poems or hymns. Even people that couldn't read would get up and speak at singing meetings. The songsters would sing from the sacred songs and spiritual hymn books. The best singers and speakers would get prizes. You would have to get dressed up proper, too. You wasn't allowed to speak at them singing meetings if you did not wear a jacket. Now in them days, we did not have such comfort, so we use to borrow jacket from some of the bakkra and them, and that jacket sometimes have to be used by all the speakers. The ladies' dresses back then was well passed the knee, the neck was pinned or buttoned up and the sleeves well passed the arm. Women also wear jumbie beads and warry beads around the neck to help them beautify themselves. The gals them look good.

There were also times of grief. In our grief too, it was the practice to give our dead meaningful farewell by having "wakes." Anybody could give out hymns at the "wakes," but that person would then have to read the hymn loud, line by line, while the rest of the people would sing. The reader of the hymn dare not make mistake or that person would be chided very severely. Those "wakes" was reading practice for us. There would be food too. Strong coffee and biscuits—when available—would be eaten to keep our eyes open until morning broad.

Mark you, there was no undertakers back then. Everybody have to bury them dead and the dead have to stay in the house until the next day. Maybe that was the main reason for "wakes."

A bunch of grass would be placed on the belly of the dead to keep it from rising. People had to bear the dead from their homes to the church. All the houses would be closed down where the funeral procession was passing.

If there would be a young picknee living in the house, the parents would usually have a ritual. Two people would stand on each side of the dead and the child would then be toss over the dead three times to keep the jumbie[0] from coming back to interfere with the picknee.

The people in my days was superstitious to the proper. On the first day of each month, before my old people got out of bed, they use to shout "Rabbit, Rabbit, Rabbit!" to bring them some kind of good luck—at least for the remainder of the month.

Artist: Headley d'Acres

Children were warned against counting stars, for if they did, the belief was that not less than three people from the village will die in a short time.

You would never find a single woman sitting on a table. She was also certain to get out of the way if somebody was sweeping for the broom must not touch her feet. The

belief was that if any of these things happen, she would never get a husband. And back then, it was also the case that a pregnant woman would never be found around a butcher's stall when an animal was being killed or the picknee would be born with some defects. If the animal was a goat, the babe would have the face of a goat.

Whenever a dog would hound[0] at night it was definite that somebody's spirit was walking. In similar manner people would say that if somebody whistle in the night, that person was calling a spirit.

Every village would have its obeah[0] man or woman. I remember there was coffee woman[0] that people use to check out to know what was going on or what would happen in the future. It was not a joke. The people believe in the superstition and the rituals.

Back then times were hard. And man do anything to survive.

–Abridged from: Keithlyn B. Smith and Fernando C. Smith, *To Shoot Hard Labour: The Life and Times of Samuel Smith, an Antiguan Workingman 1877-1982* (Scarborough, Ontario: Edan's Publishers, 1986).

Vocabulary

nega people: Black people

massa: master

bakkra: plantation owners; whites

caps: areas covered with trees and bushes

licks: strokes of a whip

saltfish: fish (usually cod) preserved by drying and salting

shad: a bony fish

tango: meat from an animal that died of natural causes or accidentally

cassie: prickly-pear cactus

paw-paw: papaya, a tropical fruit

pusley: purslane, a leafy vegetable

ground provisions: starchy root vegetables

yam: starchy root vegetable

cassava: starchy root vegetable, also called manioc or yuca

relish: sauce made from meat or vegetables

bamboola: flat cake made from grated cassava

cruffie skin: dry, rough skin

cockles: type of shellfish

fungi: cornmeal boiled to a thick paste

jumbie beads: hard seeds from several varieties of plant

tamarind: tree which produces seed pods

warri seeds: seeds from a certain tree

thatch-roof: roof made from woven branches or long grass

catchment: area to collect rainwater for drinking

crapaud: frogs

nothing else min dey: there was no other choice

to keep them cross: to ensure male potency

ten-penny nail: large nail

picknee: child, children

flamboyant shack shack: rattle made from the dried seed-pod of the flamboyant tree

jumbie: ghost

hound: howl

obeah: magic, witchcraft

coffee woman: fortune teller

UNIT 6: From India to the Caribbean

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Explain how and why people from India came to the Caribbean
2. View indentured servitude from the perspective of East Indian and African laborers
3. Describe ways that East Indian culture has influenced Caribbean societies

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the kinds of work you have done outside school. What determines how much one is paid for a job? What if there were no legal minimum wage?
2. What factors affected how much the planters paid people to work on the plantations? Why did the planters recruit workers from other countries after the slaves were freed?
3. Which parts of the world did the indentured laborers come from? Find these places on a map.
4. Which Caribbean territories received the most East Indian laborers? Find these countries on a map.
5. What is an indentured laborer? Compare the life of an indentured laborer to the life of a slave. What similarities and differences do you see?
6. What did the East Indians expect life to be like in Trinidad? How did their actual experiences compare to their expectations? If conditions were hard, why did many choose to remain in Trinidad after completing their contracts?
7. How did Africans and East Indians get along in biracial societies like Guyana and Trinidad? Why? Would anyone benefit if the two groups did not cooperate? Can you think of any parallels with racial and ethnic relations in the United States?
8. Was indentured servitude necessary? What other economic systems could have been developed after slavery?
9. What do you know about the culture of India? Describe several ways that immigration from India influenced Caribbean culture.

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Students form teams of two. In each pair, one student will pretend to be a laborer who has recently migrated from India to Trinidad. The

other student is the recorder. The first student asks the recorder to help him or her write a letter to relatives in India, telling of his/her experiences and feelings since coming to Trinidad. Letters are to be written in standard English, but may be based on one or more of the verses in *The Still Cry*.

2. Students create a display or presentation about Indian culture in India and the Caribbean. Suggested steps:

a) The class reads a novel of East Indian life in Trinidad (see Resources).

b) If possible, invite a Trinidadian or Guyanese of East Indian origin to talk with the class. Students may have relatives or acquaintances from this background. Alternatively, contact a Caribbean-American organization in your area. The Trinidad or Guyana embassies can provide addresses for civic associations of their nationals. (Embassy of Trinidad & Tobago, 1708 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington DC 20036; Embassy of Guyana, 2490 Tracy Place NW, Washington DC 20008.)

c) Using library research skills, students research particular aspects of Indian culture, such as food, festivals, occupations or family life. Books on Trinidad and Guyana will yield the most information on East Indian culture in the Caribbean.

d) Present the findings. Suggestions: a wall mural, dramatization, display of art work, or oral presentations.

▶ RESOURCES

1. Two novels picturing traditional East Indian life in Trinidad:

• Samuel Selvon, *A Brighter Sun* (London: Longman, 1979. First published 1952.)

• Ismith Khan, *The Jumbie Bird* (London: Longman, 1985. First published 1961.)

2. Two anthologies of essays on East Indians in the Caribbean, suitable for senior high and above:

• David Dabydeen and Brinsley Samaroo, eds., *India in the Caribbean* (London: Hansib Publishers Ltd., 1987).

• John La Guerre, ed., *Calcutta to Caroni: The East Indians of Trinidad* (Trinidad: University of the West Indies, 1974).

INTRODUCTION

From India to the Caribbean

As the freed slaves moved off the plantations and demanded higher wages, the planters looked for a new source of cheap labor. They found it in distant lands. Agents of the planters recruited laborers from Malaya, Madeira (a Portuguese colony in the Atlantic) and from India, China, West Africa and Europe. They came as "indentured" laborers, bound under contract to work on the sugar estates for five or ten years.

Most of the new workers came from India. India was then a British colony, and British officials supervised the recruitment. Land was scarce in India, and famines frequent. Competition from goods manufactured in England had thrown many craftsmen out of work. For thousands of Indians, the offer of work in the Caribbean seemed to offer an escape from poverty.

There are few authentic documents which describe this period through the immigrants' eyes. One of the few to do so is *The Still Cry*. Noor Kumar Mahabir, a Trinidadian writer and teacher, is the great-grandson of immigrants from India. He recorded the testimony of older Indians who lived through the indentureship experience.

The verses in *The Still Cry* include the voices of several women and men. They speak of their reasons for leaving India—the promise of a wage of *sara bara anna* (25 cents) a day. They describe life on the plantations in Trinidad: the lack of privacy in the barracks, the spartan conditions, and the hard field labor in wet clothes, sometimes with only sugar cane for the midday meal. We see the growth of ethnic solidarity among the immigrants and their separation from the African Trinidadians.

After completing their contracts, the Indians were free. Some returned to India. But for many, whose children had been born in Trinidad, their new land had become home.

The Indians who came to the Caribbean spoke Hindi, Tamil and other languages. To survive in their new home, they quickly learned some English, mixed with words from their own languages. The language used in *The Still Cry* reflects the speech of Indian immigrants around 1910.

By 1917, when the indenture scheme ended, almost half a million workers had come from India to the British Caribbean colonies. They were divided as follows:

British Guiana	239,000
Trinidad	134,000
Jamaica	33,000
St. Lucia	4,000
Grenada	3,000
St. Vincent	2,700
St. Kitts	300

Trinidad and British Guiana (Guyana) received most of the immigrants. They became biracial societies, with populations nearly evenly divided between people of African and Indian origin. Trinidadian historian Bridget Brereton describes the indenture experience in Trinidad and Tobago.

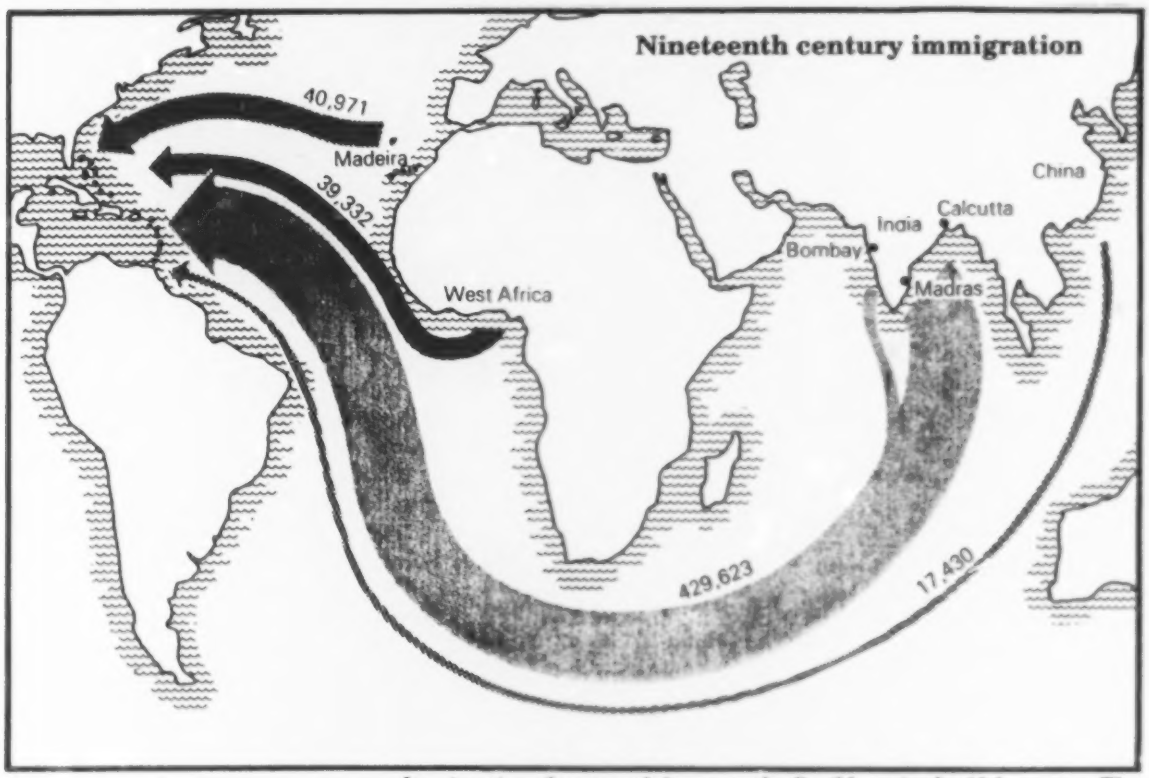
The "East Indians," as they were called in the Caribbean, added a new element to the Caribbean cultural mix. After their indentures, they tended to form their own villages and maintain Indian cultural traditions. The majority were Hindu or Muslim, although some converted to Christianity. They celebrated Indian religious festivals such as Hosay, an Islamic festival; Divali, the Hindu festival of lights; and Phagwa, honoring the Hindu god Lord Krishna.

The different cultural traditions of Africans

and Indians contributed to stereotyping between the two groups. A more important cause of mistrust, however, was the plantation owners' practice of using low-paid immigrant labor to hold down the wages they paid to free Black laborers for estate work.

Over time, however, the strict separation between the communities began to break down. Members of both groups used education as a route to enter middle-class occupations. While many Africans became doctors, lawyers or teachers, many Indians went into business. People of different backgrounds came into close contact at school and in the workplace.

Cultural sharing has increased gradually. In Trinidad, Trinidadians of all races participate in Carnival, a Lenten festival. Indian foods such as *roti* (flat bread with a curry filling) are popular throughout the Caribbean.



Immigration of contract laborers to the Caribbean in the 19th century. The greatest number, almost half a million, came from India.

READING

The Experience of Indentureship in Trinidad

BY BRIDGET BRERETON

An "indenture" means a contract, and the indentured Indians signed a contract before they left India which bound them to accept certain terms. For the period that their indenture lasted, they were not free. They could not leave their employers. They could not demand higher wages, live off the estate they were assigned to, or refuse the work given them to do.

Once the indenture had expired, however, they became free, and if they remained in Trinidad, their legal status was not different from that of the rest of the population. This is the essential difference between the indenture and slavery, for slavery, of course, was perpetual.

A basic minimum rate was stipulated in the indenture contract signed in India. This was 25 cents a day. Wages fluctuated according to the area, the period, and the season. Work was often assigned on a task basis. In Trinidad this was more usual than payment by the day, and it gave the employer a great deal of power in deciding the length and nature of the task. In the early twentieth century the average weekly wage for indentured men was about one dollar; indentured women earned an average of 48 cents.

Laborers who infringed the immigration laws, even quite trivially, could be prosecuted as criminals and sentenced to jail terms. Employers who broke their side of the contract, however, would never be prosecuted, and the worst that would happen to them would be that they might not be assigned any immigrants the next year. Indentured laborers could not leave their estates during working hours without a pass, and "free" Indians had to carry at all times their certificates of industrial residence. Both could be stopped and challenged to produce their papers by a policeman, any agent of the Immigration Department, and even the owner of the land through which they were passing.

The physical conditions under which most indentured Indians lived were wretched. They inhabited barrack ranges, similar to those of slavery days. Each range contained several rooms which measured 10' by 10' by 12' to accommodate a married couple and all their children, or two to four single adults. The partitions between the rooms never reached the roof and there was absolutely no privacy or quiet for the occupants. Cooking was done on the front steps. Latrines were not general on the estates until the twentieth century and the water supply was usually poor. This helps to explain the high incidence of hook-worm and other similar diseases.

A very large majority of immigrants who came to Trinidad did not take up the free return passage and settled permanently in the island. After the expiry of the indentures, they were free to take up different occupations. Many remained on the plantations as full-time, resident laborers. Some left agriculture altogether. Some immigrants came from castes° traditionally associated with particular crafts, and they might resume their accustomed work after their indentures. Others became petty traders, or milk sellers.

But their special contribution was in agriculture. Very many Indians left the plantations to become independent peasant farmers. Indians began to go into cocoa from about 1880. They worked as indentured labor on the larger estates°, as contractors (planting a few acres in cocoa for the estate), and as independent owners, when they could buy Crown lands°. Some Indians acquired relatively large cocoa estates. A major attraction to the Indians was the possibility of rice cultivation. Rice

was a staple in India so most Indians knew how to grow it.

The other crop which every Indian in Trinidad could cultivate was sugar, and the development of the cane-farming industry is an important contribution of the free Indian. Besides the three cash crops of cocoa, rice and sugar, Indian peasant farmers also cultivated provisions[0] of all kinds, various types of peas and beans, and green vegetables.

The society to which the Indians came was a complex one even before their arrival, and they introduced an entirely new and alien element. In Trinidad, race relations were essentially about Europeans, Africans, and their mixed descendants. Now an Asiatic element was introduced, a people who were neither African or European, neither black nor white. They came from an ancient and complex society, with a rigid social system, a high culture, and developed religions; they came to a society where a dominant European culture co-existed with a submerged African subculture. How would they fit into this society?

So long as indentureship lasted, it was only too easy for Africans to despise Indians. Only Indians were contracted to any estate, only Indians had to carry passes when off the plantations. "Slave, where is your free paper?" was reported to be a common taunt in 1873. To the African, indentureship was no different from slavery, and he was proud that he was free to do what he liked and go where he wanted. Indians on the estates performed the low prestige jobs like weeding, digging, and transporting cane, which Africans chose to avoid. So the indenture status itself contributed to the unfavorable image of the "coolie[0]." Africans, once at the bottom of the social scale, now had an easily recognizable class to which they could feel superior.

The two races did not mix: they lived in uneasy, but mainly non-violent, co-existence. They held unfavorable stereotyped notions about each other, and these notions were to

persist. Formed in the nineteenth century, they were to survive with hardly any change throughout the colonial period; they are still strong today.

–Abridged from Bridget Brereton, "The Experience of Indentureship: 1845-1917," in John La Guerre, ed., *From Calcutta to Caroni: The East Indians of Trinidad* (Trinidad: University of the West Indies, 1985).

Vocabulary

estate: plantation

caste: social groupings within the population of India. Each caste has a defined ranking and is associated with particular occupations.

Crown lands: land belonging to the British government

provisions: starchy root vegetables like yams and cassava

coolie: negative term for person from India or of Indian descent

READING

The Still Cry

BY NOOR KUMAR MAHABIR

all is grass house in india
every one
whole village
bout 2,000 people
i wukking in de field
own land
own wuk
e no wuk for nobody[0]
e no wuk for nobody

i planting rice
me eh[0] have no breda
me only have four sister

me sister remain dey
india
dem married dey
dey have cheren
cheren
cheren

i come to wuk for money
an go back
i been wukking in de ship
i come calcutta

dem muslim fellar fool me
bring me dis country

e say
e ha plenty money
e axe me
how much you getting every month
i say
three rupee[0]
e say
you chupid
over dey sara bara anna rogh[0]
every day

* * *

dat ship come one thousand people
plenty oman[0]
man
four
five cheren dem bring
me eh know if de oman an dem
married or nuh married

everybody glad to come dis country

i see seven sea
paglaa sa mundar[0]
white black green brown
all kind a sea
roughest is atlantic

ship going so
water coming dis side
passing dat side
all people going inside

forty days e take to come chinedad[0]

* * *

dem white man go an pick up people
how much dis estate want
how much ah dem dis estate want
how much ah dem dis estate want

ten a we go picton estate
four oman
six man

people from de estate come to see we
wha is you name
wha is you name
wha is you name
an we start to talk

one a de barrick have six room
man dey one room
oman dey one room
who have wife

dem livin different barrick
who have cheren
dem livin one room

only bar up in de center°
if you farting

i could hear
if you farting
dem could hear

like jungle
bush°
just like living in de bush
dat is all
whole barrick india people
all e india people

***

dey go tell you
babu° bring wood an ting
dry wood to cook
an we ha to go
sunday sunday

dey go gi ration
dahl°
chawal°
neemak°
pot
e spoon
all dat e go gi you
tinin plate

you cooking
eating
dey checking
twenty-five cents wukking whole day

twenty-five cents
wukking
wukking
wukking

***

plantam cane
toting cane
put it manure head
who time rain falling leaking manure mouth
all e clothes leaking
long time cyan° get clothes
put it de patch
every man put on dhoti°

every man e bound°
must wuk
if e nah do it
going jail

***

in cane estate
driver° roughing people

dey beating dem
dey kicking dem
dey doing all kind a ting
i cyan lie
sometime we cyan change clothes
have to go to wuk in de morning
have to go to wuk in de morning
same wet clothes
same wet clothes have to put on an go to wuk

wuk every day
sunday too
croptime°
have to go sunday too

sometime 8 o'clock have to come from dey
when e done full de truck
den e go leh we go
same wet clothes

lunch in de estate
sucking cane°
sucking cane nuh
sucking cane
food
you cyan come home
remain right dey

when suck bout two cane
belly full

* * *

we di want to go back india
but which part e go go back
which ship
an who go gi we de ship

* * *

e have a kirwal[0] man in de draining[0]
an one is a carter man[0]
an one is a groom[0]
not plenty kirwal
but dey coming
day an day
day an day
dey getting wuk an leaving
an dey wukking

we eh interfering wid dem
we living for weself
we talking between weself
we singing
playing drum an eating
sleeping
eating together
we indian self
we eh meddle wid dem

* * *

india coming dey
e mark
five year done
e want go india
have to pay one passage[0]
if ten year done
free send it dey
go
dat time gi paper
some people buss paper an trow way
some people want to change it shop buy someting
plenty a dem wipe de backside
ship no coming
ship no going

if no go india dat time
go give you five-acre land
house an land
wuk an eat
mark it de paper

five year after
free
nobody no humbug[0] e
if ah living barrick
dead barrick
nobody cyan put out

if ah no like it

Artist: Danuta Radzik

go ork any estate
any barrick
go nedder estate

all me cheren born hyar
all ah dem married hyar
all a dem de same place

i plantam rice
plantam *damadole*[0]
plantam ochro[0]
orking de estate
minam de cow
rentam land

***

everything have hyar
cheren have hyar
india no have notting

all e family dey
all e friend dey hyar
all e family dey hyar

***

i tell de man
write a letter for india
to family
an ley de letter come back
den i could know
e send three letter
three letter
an up to today
i eh get no answer

—Abridged from Noor Kumar Mahabir, *The Still Cry: Personal Accounts of East Indians in Trinidad & Tobago During Indentureship (1845-1917)* (Calaloux Publications, 1987).

Vocabulary

e no wuk for nobody: I don't work for anybody, i.e. I work for myself

eh: don't

rupee: unit of Indian currency

sara bara anna rogh: 25 cents

oman: woman, women

paglaa sa mundar: furious Atlantic ocean

chinedad: Trinidad

only bar up in de center: the partitions between rooms did not reach the ceiling

bush: forest or other wild area

babu: old man

dahl: split peas

chawal: rice

neemak: salt

cyan: can't

dhoti: large loincloth worn by Indian men

bound: indentured

driver: worker in charge of supervising other workers on the sugar plantation, ranking just below the overseer

croptime: harvest, when ripe canes are cut

sucking cane: the workers staved off hunger by sucking the raw cane

kirwal: Creole (of African descent)

draining: ditches for irrigation

carter man: worker who guides the mule-drawn cart that hauls cut cane

groom: worker who cares for mules

pay one passage: pay for the return trip

humbug: bother

damadole: tomato

ochro: okra

UNIT 7: The Promise of Education

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Consider how access to education can maintain or change economic and power relationships between groups in a society
2. Examine attitudes toward education in Caribbean societies

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What words could you use to describe José's mother? What makes you say so? Why do you think she was so determined to find the money for his schooling?
2. Describe the Sainte-Thérèse neighborhood to which José and his mother move. What does he like about it?
3. In what ways is José different from the other students at the high school? In what ways is he the same? How do these differences and similarities affect his actions? Have you ever felt different from the people around you? If so, how did it affect you?
4. What did José used to think was the reason for his grandmother's miserable living conditions? What was the real reason? In the U.S., what myths do we sometimes use to explain why people are poor? What, in your opinion, are the real reasons?
5. Why does José finally make up his mind to succeed in school?
6. How do you imagine José's story ends? What might have happened to him later in life?
7. What would José's life have been like if he could not attend school? How does access to education (or lack of access) help determine the power of different groups in a society? Give examples from the Caribbean and the United States, or from other countries you are familiar with.
8. What does it mean for José to "become a man?" What does it mean for you to become a man or become a woman?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Tell the class that they will read a story set in Martinique, a French colony in the Caribbean. Have students locate Martinique and France on a map.

On day 1, show the film Sugar Cane Alley (see Resources). Afterward, ask students the following:

- What was life like for the sugar cane workers in the film? In what ways had it changed since the end of slavery? In what ways

had it stayed the same?

- What was the role of Medouze, the old man? What values and traditions did he represent?
- Do you think José's story was typical of what most sugar cane workers experienced, or not? Explain.
- The film maker has a strong point of view and message to communicate. Describe the film maker's message in your own words.

On day 2, students read the story in class. Afterward, use the "Questions for Discussion" to stimulate debate.

2. Compare the educational conditions described in the story to those in the United States. Some points to consider: minority access to scholarships; how economic factors serve to segregate schools racially; academic tracking; education as a means of social mobility for low-status groups; education as a means of preserving the higher status of privileged groups; barriers to education for children of migrant workers, the homeless and refugees; reasons why students drop out or continue in school.

Students could follow this discussion with some recommendations to their school district on how to improve the quality and accessibility of education to all young people.

▶ RESOURCES

1. Joseph Zobel, *Black Shack Alley* (Three Continents Press, 1980. Translated by Keith Q. Warner.) Available from Three Continents Press.
2. The film *Sugar Cane Alley,* directed by Euzhan Palcy, is based on Zobel's novel. 16 mm, 103 minutes, French with English subtitles. Available from New Yorker Films, and in the international section of many local video stores.
3. Other Caribbean novels dealing with the theme of education include:
   - Austin Clarke, *Growing Up Stupid Under the Union Jack* (Barbados)
   - Zee Edgell, *Beka Lamb* (Belize)
   - Merle Hodge, *Crick Crack, Monkey* (Trinidad & Tobago)
   - George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin* (Barbados)

INTRODUCTION

The Promise of Education

The independence of Haiti left France with three colonies in the Caribbean: Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana. On the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, like their neighbors, large plantations produced sugar using slave labor. The slaves in the French colonies were freed in 1848, ten years after emancipation in the British islands.

Although slavery was abolished, many aspects of life in Martinique and Guadeloupe remained unchanged. Sugar was still the mainstay of their economies, and plantation owners still controlled most of the good land. Without land of their own to farm, many of the former slaves and their descendants had no choice but to continue working on the sugar plantations. Although they now received wages, life for them was little different than during slavery days.

An important escape route from this situation, in both the French and British colonies, was education. Gradually more schools were built, and by the early twentieth century most children could attend elementary school for a few years. Beyond this it was more difficult. High school places were limited, and tuition fees too high for poor families. Going to high school and university was a privilege mainly for the children of the middle class and the wealthy.

Each year, however, a certain number of scholarships were offered to students who got the best grades on an examination. For students from poor families, a scholarship offered a start on the road up. A student who did well in high school might earn another scholarship to attend a university in England or France. There he or she could train for a profession such as medicine, journalism or law. In this way, many Caribbean people of African or Indian background used education to join the middle class.

The novel *Black Shack Alley* is set in Martinique in the 1930s. A young boy, José, has grown up in the wretched shacks bordering the sugar plantation where his grandmother, M'man Tine, cuts cane. Although it is almost 100 years since emancipation, ten wealthy families still own most of the land on the island. Life is still brutally hard for sugar plantation workers like M'man Tine.

For José's grandmother and mother, the young boy's education offers hope for the family to escape the cane fields. They decide that he will attend the prestigious Lycée Schoelcher, the only high school in Martinique at that time. In this story, based on author Joseph Zobel's life, we see why people all over the Caribbean consider education as holding the promise of a better future.

READING

The Scholarship

BY JOSEPH ZOBEL

I had obtained from the Colony[0] a quarter scholarship.

In the offices of the Head of the Office of Public Instruction, where my mother Délia and I had learned the news, a young clerk had told us that with scholarships it was a question of whom you knew, and that she was surprised that by some unheard-of stroke of luck, without the intervention of anyone with some pull, or any recommendation, that partial scholarship had come my way.

In the bursary[0] at the *lycée*[0], a bit later on, it was explained to us that, in order to benefit from that quarter scholarship, we still had to pay eighty-seven francs[0] fifty per term for my schooling.

We were both crushed by this disappointment.

But what I couldn't understand was that my mother did not show any sign of discouragement or of giving up. I sensed in her a feeling of anguish even more acute than mine and yet I saw her persist in walking throughout the town, skipping from office to office, dragging me behind her, constantly enquiring what she was to do. How could I enter a *lycée* where my mother had to pay eighty-seven francs every three months, and for several years—about seven, we'd been told?

I couldn't understand, either, why my mother didn't just give up, since in the final analysis, there were the *Cours Supérieurs* and *Cours Complémentaires*[0] that were free.

But she kept on saying:

"**They** are too wicked! It's because we're black, poor and alone in the world **that** they didn't give you a full scholarship. **They** fully realize that I'm an unfortunate woman and that I couldn't pay for you to go to the *lycée*. **They** know only too well that giving you a quarter scholarship is the same as not giving you anything at all. But **they** don't know what a fighting woman I am. Well! I'm not giving up this quarter scholarship. You will go to **their lycée!**

Elementary school students in Grenada. For people throughout the Caribbean, education offers the promise of a better future.

My grief stemmed not so much from my doubting her ability to do this, but from seeing my poor mother so desperately engaged in a struggle beyond her strength, against people

who seemed to be numerous and powerful as well as invisible ...

M'man Délia[0] had an excellent job with some local whites in Route Didier[0]. She did the washing and the housework, shared with a cook, a driver and a gardener the left-overs from the masters' meals, had a room furnished with an iron bed, with clean, soft bedding. She made one hundred francs a month. Very few maids, she had confided to M'man Tine[0], were as well paid. Not even in Route Didier where one found the richest white people and the best black servants.

Now, because of me, she had to begin by giving up that position, rent a room and take in washing.

We were then living in the Sainte-Thérèse district.

A certain Dr. Guerri, who owned those lands, scarcely cleared of trees, to the east of Fort-de-France[0], had cut out and rented small lots to all who wanted to put up a shack.

A sizeable black population of workers—the overflow from the other slum-filled, malaria and typhoid fever-infested districts of the town—flocked to the area and, on the initiative of each person and with epic zeal, set up a huge encampment. Five or six alleys had been traced out, paved in any old fashion and given names whose origin or meaning no one knew. Along those alleys, there sprang up a line of the standard type of shacks: huge boxes, that had contained imported American cars, set gingerly on concrete or dried stones or on mere wooden stilts and covered with eight sheets of galvanize[0]. Often the roof consisted of a multitude of more or less rusty tins, smashed in, cut, flattened and laid out like scales of a fish.

And already, many of the shacks served as groceries, as tailor and butcher shops as well as peaceful dwellings. All around, children would play, by no means afraid that they would knock everything over in the frolicking. And in front, on a Sunday afternoon, a man would settle down in a *chaise-longue* to smoke, with nothing else on his mind, or with his wife would cultivate a few somewhat humble flowers, not too ordinary, though, to offer as a sincere token of affection and of love.

In the middle of a wide space rose a pile of excavated dirt, behind which a large part of the population of Sainte-Thérèse worked on the building of a church to which we would belong.

I liked that district very much. It was not that I found it beautiful to look at, but I was very happy to see the arrival and settlement of all those people who, with the greatest of ease, and no doubt thinking only of their immediate concerns, dug into those vague lands, with the force of an act of love, their inexpugnable human roots.

A few people, who already owned more solid and more conventional dwelling places in town, built in Sainte-Thérèse shacks befitting the style of the area, that were rented by people who were not in a position to build their own. My mother was part of this latter category; but she was so contented to be in Sainte-Thérèse, so happy to see a glimmer of hope that one day she could buy a car box and six sheets of galvanize to build herself a small two-room house!

Near the district flowed the Rivière-Monsieur[0]. It was there that, from Tuesday to Thursday, my mother went to do her washing. The other days of the week were devoted to mending and ironing.

She had large and small loads of washing. The small ones were paid for every Saturday night, on delivery, the large ones at the end of the month.

I found this *lycée* very big, teeming with students, well-staffed with teachers.

The most striking change from my school in Petit-Bourg was the fact that I had to be caged during classes in a room whose windows did not look out onto any trees, and to be held captive, at recess time, in a wall-enclosed yard in which, considering the amount of students,

it wasn't even possible to have a good game of *barres*[0].

Then, too, in that crowd of students (from tiny tots from the Infant School right up to the bigger ones whom I had mistaken for teachers) I found myself as lonely as I'd ever been—there was nobody who said anything to me; nobody I'd dare share a secret with.

The first day, I was dressed in my First Communion suit with my black boots; the following week, I wore the white suit in which I had received the absolution; and little by little, I started wearing my old suits from the elementary school and a pair of rubber-soled shoes.

What a difference compared with all the other students dressed in suits that bore the mark of carefully selected wardrobes, and carrying leather schoolbags, pens with golden rings, watches!

Next to me, in the study, sat a boy wearing an identification bracelet with his first name engraved on it: "Serge." The name of a clean, fresh child, of a fair-skinned child. At any rate, not the name of a little black, unfortunate boy. The name of a nice, little boy in velvet breeches[0] and silk jacket, with brown shoes, smooth, sweet-smelling hair, separated by a slanting part, and wearing a gold watch on his wrist.

His father brought him and picked him up by car at the school gate. And whenever it rained, the caretaker, who would look at me so unpleasantly, graciously brought him a raincoat so he could cross the yard.

There were many students like that, those in my first year class and those I saw gathered or playing together.

There was no one like me. Furthermore, nobody paid any attention to me.

Could it be I was that repulsive in my dress?

I think rather that it was my self-centeredness, my lack of gaiety, in contrast to their easy-going behavior, their joy among themselves, the fact that they were at home in this *lycée*, that isolated me. Of course, if there were one who had been born in a Black Shack Alley, one whose parents wielded a spade or a cutlass[0], I'd have recognized him and approached him. But I was the only one of my kind.

***

What was I doing in that *lycée*?

My mother was told that I could leave school with enough knowledge to enable me to go to France and become a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer. While filling out my application for the Scholarship Examination, Mr. Roc had hinted that to me; but I didn't feel very much inclined to do something in that field. The others, the Serges, yes. But me ...

It was because of that lack of incentive, no doubt, that my first term's results were so poor. I had only been on the honor roll the first month.

When, on Christmas Eve, my mother received my term report, she was plunged into the depths of despair. All my grades were mediocre. And among the unfavorable comments, there was the one made by the mathematics teacher: "Student of little interest." Me, who, with Mr. Roc, always solved both my problems!

"José," my mother said to me, "you don't see how I work my fingers to the bone scrubbing piles of dirty clothes and how dry I'm becoming from ironing day and night? You don't know it's so I can pay the eighty-seven francs fifty for your education and that you must work in class so that money doesn't go down the drain; so I don't kill myself for nothing! You've just thrown away eighty-seven francs fifty, since you don't have a single good grade for the term. Yes, it's as if you had thrown into the sea all your maman's money, along with the five francs M'man Tine had given you ..."

My mother had never rebuked me more

José and his grandmother in a scene from the film Sugar Cane Alley

angrily; but if she had beaten me, I'd have detested the *lycée*, hated the teachers and all the students—they were the ones, both of them, who had prevented me from working.

Nobody bothered with me; I was not asked anything. In Petit-Bourg the schoolmasters saw to it that you learned your lessons and did your homework, otherwise you were clouted about the ears. But in this *lycée*, you did as little as you wanted.

My mother hadn't even raised her voice and, listening to her, I had the impression she was crying; as if her hands, bruised by the scrubbing of the heavy clothes, were bleeding; as if her arms, worn out by the iron, were hurting her; or as if it were I who had struck her on her bruised hands, on her painful arms ... struck my maman!

I burst out sobbing.

I cried for my mother who had wanted to see me become a good student and whom I had disappointed and caused grief.

But when I dried my eyes, I wanted, if it were possible, to return to school immediately. I had made up my mind to work.

Perhaps it was because of her heart, more penetrable at that time, that M'man Tine's condition became apparent to me with painful, abnormal acuteness. Abnormal and shameful, since that scene at the *lycée*. A teacher had asked each student his identity and the name and profession of his parents. Without any hesitation, I had naively given those of my mother, washer-woman, with my address in town; and just as naively it was the name of M'man Tine that had come from my mouth as next of kin. But, at her "profession," I had faltered. First of all, I didn't know, in French, the name of the job she held. No, it certainly did not exist in French.

"Profession!" the teacher shouted, impatient.

"Doctor, school-teacher, cabinet-maker, office worker, tailor, seamstress, pharmacist," the other students had said.

For me, impossible to find the name of the work my grandmother did. Were I to dare to say: "she works in sugar cane fields," the whole class would burst out laughing. There was nothing like such things to have those students in stitches.

"Farmer," I finally stammered out.

That word, on its own, had slipped from my mouth and I was grateful that it had come to my rescue.

Fortunately, the opportunity to give my parents' profession never again presented itself.

But this time, stronger and deeper than when I used to accompany her to the fields, a feeling of compassion came over me every time, on evenings, during that stormy month of September, M'man Tine came home, her

rags and her skin weather-beaten, soaked like a sponge, and every time that, wanting to send me to the store, she looked in vain for the missing cent in every corner of the room.

Since she had first fallen ill, she was always ailing. She often complained of sharp pains in her back, and of suffocating fits. When she had been drenched by showers, I saw her get up during the night, make infusions[6] and shiver with fever.

The more I looked at M'man Tine, the more I felt within me that she was subjected to an unjust punishment which, at times, made her appear more frightening than pitiful.

Why? Why not live in a house, why not wear dresses without holes, why not eat bread and meat, without always having to mumble those long, sad words that stuck in my throat and strangled me?

And who forced her to be like that?

Referring to stories about misers that Vireil had related to me, I had believed for a long time that the minute you were an adult and began to work, you acquired a certain "fortune" to buy all you needed; but there were some who used it and some, the misers, who hid everything, preferring to have terrible dwelling places, shabby clothes and poor food.

For a long time, as a result, I had thought that M'man Tine had money, perhaps bags of gold hidden somewhere under the ground, and that she refused to ever lay a finger on it. Now, how I regretted no longer believing such!

In point of fact, something seemed to me positively abnormal—not in the rather bizarre job M'man Tine did, but in those perpetual feelings of destitution, of shame and of slow death emanating from this job.

And the anguish with which those considerations gripped me abated a bit only in the earnestness of my dreams of becoming a man, so that M'man Tine wouldn't have to work anymore on the sugar cane plantations.

The re-opening of school and my return to the *lycée* took place with this determination uppermost in my mind.

–Abridged from: Joseph Zobel, *Black Shack Alley* (Three Continents Press, 1980). Originally published in 1974 as *La rue cases-nègres*. Translated by Keith Q. Warner.

Vocabulary

Colony: the government of the colony

bursary: accounting office

lycée: high school

franc: unit of French currency

Cours Supérieurs, Cours Complémentaires: special grades for students not going on to high school

M'man Délia: Mama Délia

Route Didier: Didier Street

M'man Tine: Mama Tine

Fort-de-France: capital of Martinique

galvanize: corrugated sheet metal

Rivière-Monsieur: the Monsieur River

barres: children's racing game

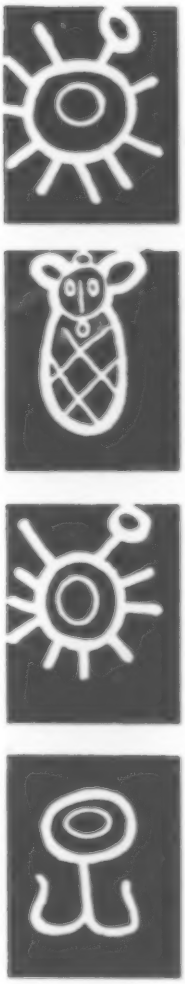
breeches: knee-length pants

cutlass: large knife used for agricultural work; machete

infusion: tea made from herbs

PART FOUR

BUILDING NEW NATIONS



In the 20th century, the paths of the Spanish, French, Dutch and English-speaking territories divided.

In Cuba and Puerto Rico, independence movements fought against Spanish rule. Just as victory was near, a powerful neighbor—the United States—stepped in to take control. Cuba rejected U.S. influence when it carried out a socialist revolution in 1959.

The Caribbean territories belonging to France and Holland did not seek independence, but remained part of those countries' overseas empires. England's Caribbean colonies followed yet a third path. They became independent in stages, first receiving self-government status, then full independence from Britain.

Throughout the region, independence brought new challenges. In each territory, people sought to define national cultures which reflected their Caribbean heritage. They had to deal with colonialism's legacy of poverty, and find new ways to survive economically. Not least, they had to forge new roles as independent states within the world community. Continuing efforts to meet these challenges have shaped the modern experience of Caribbean peoples.

UNIT 8: Antillean Independence Movements

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Explain the goals and methods of the Cuban and Puerto Rican independence movements in the 19th century
2. Learn about leaders who worked for Antillean independence

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Explain the relationship between Ramón Emeterio Betances's four goals in life.
2. What adjectives could you use to describe Betances? For each descriptive word, provide evidence from Betances' life story.
3. Why did Cubans and Puerto Ricans see their anti-colonial struggles as linked? In what ways did they cooperate? Why were people from the Dominican Republic less involved in this effort?

(But note the name of a Dominican who played a leading role in the Cuban independence movement.)

4. Name two women who worked for the independence of Puerto Rico. What are they remembered for? Name and compare two women in U.S. history. What may be the reasons we hear so little about women in history?
5. What kind of family did José Martí come from? In what way did education make a difference in his life?
6. Martí was jailed at age 16. What impact does such punishment have on people? What impact did it have on Martí?
7. Describe three events during Martí's youth which contributed to his decision to fight for Cuban independence from Spain.
8. Compare and contrast the lives of Ramón Emeterio Betances and José Martí. In what ways were they similar? In what ways different?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. The class constructs a timeline of developments in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. (This activity may also be done for any one of the three countries—Cuba, Puerto Rico, or the Dominican Republic.) Students should first mark key stages of development: settlement by indigenous peoples: Spanish conquest; arrival of the first Africans; small farming; development of a sugar plantation economy; independence struggle against Spain; intervention by the United States. They can then add more details from the readings. Drawings can be dis-

played alongside the timeline.

2. Each student chooses one of the following people:
   Juan Pablo Duarte
   Ramón Emeterio Betances
   Segundo Ruiz Belvis
   Lola Rodríguez de Tío
   Mariana Bracetti
   Mathias Bruckman (also spelled Brugman or Bregman)
   Manuel Rojas
   Carlos Manuel de Céspedes
   Antonio Maceo
   Mariana Grajales (mother of Antonio Maceo)
   Máximo Gómez
   Calixto García
   Ana Betancourt
   Eugenio María de Hostos
   José Martí

   Using library research skills, students will write a brief profile of their person. They should look for information about the person's youth, important events that influenced his or her ideas, the person's contribution to the independence struggle, and how he or she is honored today. (In evaluating student work, it should be taken into account that more information is available on some of these figures than on others.)

   The activity can finish with a mock news conference. Each historical figure will address reporters to discuss how the independence struggle is going and what it hopes to achieve.

3. Ask students to imagine that they are Antonio Maceo, the Cuban independence fighter. Each student writes a letter to Lola Rodríguez de Tío, who has gone into exile following the Lares Revolt. They should describe their experiences in the Ten Years War, explain to her why they are fighting, and why Cubans and Puerto Ricans should work together to win independence from Spain.

4. Collaborate with a music or Spanish teacher to have the class learn the song "Guantanamera." Students may illustrate part of the song.

RESOURCES

1. Sources on this period in Puerto Rico include:

• Loida Figueroa, *History of Puerto Rico: From the Beginning to 1892* (Anaya Book Co., 1972)

• Kal Wagenheim and Olga Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans: A Documentary History* (Anchor Books, 1973).

• Olga Jiménez de Wagenheim, *Revolt for Independence: El Grito de Lares* (Westview Press, 1984).

• Edna Acosta-Belén, *The Puerto Rican Woman: Perspectives on Culture, History and Society* (Praeger, 1986)

• César Andreu Iglesias, ed., *Memoirs of Bernardo Vega* (Monthly Review Press, 1984).

2. Writings by José Martí in English translation:

• *Inside the Monster: Writings on the United States and American Imperialism*. Edited by Philip S. Foner. (Monthly Review Press, 1975). Martí's essays on American life and culture.

• *Our America: Writings on Latin America and the Struggle for Cuban Independence*. Edited by Philip S. Foner. (Monthly Review Press, 1977).

INTRODUCTION

Antillean Independence Movements

While "King Sugar" ruled the English and French colonies, Spain's Caribbean colonies followed a different path. Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo at first had few large plantations. Although some slaves were used, most people in these colonies were independent farmers, working their own small plots of land. They raised livestock, tobacco, coffee, cotton, corn and rice. People of Arawak, Spanish and African origins intermarried, and gradually came to think of themselves as one people.

This quiet period ended when the slaves in neighboring Saint Domingue revolted. After declaring Haiti's independence, the Haitian army surged across the border into Spanish Santo Domingo to unify the island and abolish slavery. Santo Domingo remained under Haitian rule until 1844. In that year, a successful revolt led by Juan Pablo Duarte threw off Haitian control. Santo Domingo became the independent Dominican Republic.

The Haitian revolution had another important consequence. As a French colony, Saint Domingue had been the world's largest sugar producer. After the revolution ruined its sugar industry, the way was clear for Cuba, and to a lesser extent Puerto Rico, to move aggressively into the world sugar market.

Cuban landowners set up giant sugar plantations, worked by thousands of slaves. There were many slave revolts. In the early 1800s Spain's other Latin American colonies were fighting for and winning independence. But in Cuba and Puerto Rico, wealthy plantation owners favored continued Spanish rule as protection against the slaves.

Steadily, however, a movement for independence and the abolition of slavery gained strength. Spain was a declining power in the 1800s. Its economy could not absorb all the products its colonies produced, but it refused to let the colonies trade freely with other countries. Spanish rule was harsh, with few political or civil rights.

Many Cubans and Puerto Ricans wanted to follow the Latin American example and break free of Spain. They were inspired, too, by the revolutions in France and Haiti, and by the American war of independence. Cubans and Puerto Ricans worked together to plan their struggle against Spain. Some even dreamed of a time when the Antilles—as the three Spanish-speaking Caribbean territories were called—would be a single independent nation.

One such person was the Puerto Rican

Mariana Bracetti, one of the leaders of the Lares Rebellion.

doctor Ramón Emeterio Betances. Together with his friend Segundo Ruiz Belvis, Betances led a small group of Puerto Ricans working for independence. They included Lola Rodríguez de Tío, a poet who wrote the lyrics for the revolutionary anthem, *La Borinqueña*. Another member of the group was Mariana Bracetti, known as *Braza de Oro* (Golden Arm).

In 1868, the group planned an attack that they hoped would spark an island-wide revolt against Spain. Four hundred rebels took over the town of Lares, but Spanish troops quickly crushed the uprising. *El Grito de Lares*—the Cry of Lares—symbolized the beginning of Puerto Rico's independence struggle.

A few weeks later, *El Grito de Yara*—the Cry of Yara—began the war in Cuba. Although the revolt was started by wealthy landowners with grievances against Spain, the rebels included many Afro-Cubans fighting for abolition and independence. Two brilliant military strategists led the rebels: Máximo Gómez, who was born in the Dominican Republic, and Antonio Maceo, an Afro-Cuban. Gómez and Maceo led the rebels, called *mambises*, to victory after victory.

After ten years of fighting, Spain agreed to abolish slavery and move the colonies toward self-government. But the Spanish government also unleashed heavy repression against the independence movement. Cuban and Puerto Rican revolutionaries were jailed, tortured and executed. Many fled to exile.

Some came to the United States, where they raised funds to continue the war against Spain. A Cuban-born poet and journalist, José Martí, was a leading member of this exile group. Martí began his political activities while still a high school student in Cuba. When he was 16, he was sent to prison, then deported to Spain. He moved to New York City in 1880, where he organized support for independence among Cubans and Puerto Ricans in the United States.

Two strong beliefs motivated Martí. One was the unity of Cubans, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans as Spanish-speaking Caribbean people. The other was fear that the United States threatened Latin American independence. Martí admired many traits of the North American people, whom he came to know during his years in New York. But he knew that the growth of big business was driving the United States to expand. After dominating the Antilles, he feared, the United States would use the islands as stepping stones into Latin America. "Cuba must be free—from Spain and from the United States," he wrote.

In 1895 war broke out in Cuba again. Martí, Antonio Maceo and Máximo Gómez returned from exile to lead the fight. A few days later, Martí was killed in battle.

The war continued, and in 1897, Spain granted autonomy, or limited self-government, to Cuba and Puerto Rico. Independence seemed near. But on April 25, 1898, the United States suddenly entered the war. U.S. troops invaded Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, a Spanish colony in the Pacific.

Puerto Rico and the Philippines became U.S. possessions. Cuba became independent, but was ruled by an American military government until 1902. Under a new Cuban constitution, the United States reserved the right to intervene militarily in Cuba and to maintain a U.S. military base on the island until the year 2000.

READING

The Man Who Bought Babies

BY JAY NELSON TUCK AND NORMA COOLEN VERGARA

A baby was to be baptized in the church, and on the steps outside a young doctor waited. Soon he saw what he was waiting for—a family of African Puerto Ricans, the mother carrying the baby in her arms.

The doctor hurried to speak to them before they could get to the church. They talked for a few moments. The doctor gave the mother some money. The family, weeping with joy, turned away from the church and left with the baby not baptized.

Dr. Betances had "bought" another baby.

A slave baby's freedom could be bought by paying 50 *pesos*° to the owner if the child had been baptized. If the baby had not been baptized, the price was half as much—25 *pesos*. That is why the doctor used to wait outside the church to find unbaptized babies. The mother would take the money to the slave owner and buy her child's freedom. The baby could always be baptized later, but he or she would grow up free.

Young Betances determined that he would spend his life fighting for four causes: the abolition—or end—of slavery; the good health of people who needed his services as a doctor; independence for Puerto Rico, Cuba and Santo Domingo; and the combining of the three islands into a single Confederation of the Antilles to make one nation big enough to earn the respect of the other nations of the world. Because of his work for this last dream, he was called *El Antillano* (the Antillean).

Ramón Emeterio Betances y Alarcón was born in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, on April 8, 1827, to well-off parents. Even as a little boy he read books written for grown-ups. As a teenager, he talked openly of independence for Puerto Rico.

He was sent to France for higher education, to the university in Paris to study medicine. Perhaps it was his French education that made Betances different from other Puerto Rican leaders. France had fought one bloody revolution for freedom. Now Paris was full of Frenchmen who were willing to fight again.

Ramón Emeterio Betances as a young man.

Betances spent long evenings in the cafes talking and arguing. He heard the fiery speeches of the great French fighter for freedom, Victor Hugo. Soon, unlike other Puerto Ricans who believed that independence must be won peacefully, Betances came to think it could be won only through revolution.

In France Betances also began to make a reputation for himself as a man of medicine. He studied diseases which occur frequently in tropical countries like Puerto Rico, and published scientific articles in Paris, Madrid and Latin America. In 1853, at age 26, he finished his studies and went home.

Two years later, one of the most terrible events in Puerto Rican history took place—an outbreak of cholera. It spread over almost the entire island, and before it ended, 30,000 people had died.

For weeks Dr. Betances hardly slept at all. Because the disease was spread by filth, he issued regulations to improve sanitation. He was everywhere, taking care of all patients, not caring whether they could pay him. In one day he could wear out six fresh horses while he traveled to help the sick in distant places. Where the roads were good enough he rode in a little carriage, otherwise on horseback. Always there were healing medicines in the carriage or in his saddlebags, given free to the poor.

Betances spoke out constantly against the slave owners and the terrible conditions of the poor. The Governor ordered him to leave the country, and the doctor went back to Paris. A few months later, Puerto Rico changed governors again, and it was safe for Betances to go home. He again took up the practice of medicine and also went right back to his politics.

With a young lawyer named Segundo Ruiz Belvis, he started a secret organization to work for freeing the slaves. On the mainland, the Civil War had begun in the United States, and the ideals of Abraham Lincoln inspired Betances and his friends.

In 1863, revolution broke out in Santo Domingo. The Governor of Puerto Rico, Felix María de Messina Iglesias, sent two battalions of soldiers to help the Spanish government keep down the Dominican people. Betances saw this as a chance to strike a blow for Puerto Rican freedom. He wrote a message to the people which said:

"Puerto Ricans! For more than three centuries, Spanish tyranny has been oppressing us. Any sons of the island who have dared to say something for the good of their countrymen have been arrested, exiled and ruined.

"We have been paying heavy taxes, and we still don't have road, railways, telegraphs or steamships.

"And now the government tries to make us hate our brothers in Santo Domingo, to make us fight against them.

"Arise, Puerto Ricans! Let us show the dogs who rob and insult us that the *jíbaros*[0] of Borinquen[0] are not cowards! Let us unite against the oppressors of our land!"

Governor Messina was sure he knew who had written those words, and he called Betances to La Fortaleza[0]. "If you continue this, I shall be obliged to hang you," the governor warned.

Dr. Betances looked him straight in the eye. "General," he said coldly, "on that day's night, I will sleep better than you will."

Messina ordered Betances to leave the island, and for a short while he did so, but he soon returned after a new governor had taken over. However, he was not to stay long. In 1867, some soldiers rebelled against their officers. Betances and Ruiz Belvis were among those blamed for the rebellion, although they had nothing to do with it, and they were ordered to sail to Spain to be punished by the government there.

Instead, the two friends fled by night in a small boat to Santo Domingo. "The place where we landed is the worst one can imagine," Betances wrote. "It is sandy along the shore, and inland it is full of barren rocks and

populated by fierce mosquitoes. The heat was suffocating, the drinking water warm, the biscuits moldy and the cheese spoiled. I had a terrible fever and had to lie down, but the mosquitoes made me get up again to drink coffee. 'This coffee makes me think of our faraway land,' I said to Ruiz, and he smiled."

The friends went to New York where the story of their escape made a sensation in the newspapers. There they tried to enlist men and buy arms for the revolution. Ruiz went on a trip to Chile to seek help, and there, unhappily, he died. Betances then returned to Santo Domingo where he would be closer to Puerto Rico. From there it was easier for him to keep in touch with the members of the secret Revolutionary Committee.

¡PUERTORRIQUEÑOS!

DIEZ MANDAMIENTOS

ASÍ, acreemos españoles ó no, NO-

DR. BETANCES

Diez Mandamientos (Ten Commands) to the Puerto Rican people from Dr. Betances on the eve of the Lares Revolt.

The conspirators had to be careful, for spies watched everyone in Puerto Rico. The revolutionists were organized into secret groups, with only the leaders knowing people in more than one group. They had a secret system for recognizing one another. When one of them shook hands with someone else, he would tap twice with his index finger very lightly on the other person's little finger—so lightly that it would not be noticed unless one were looking for it. If the other person recognized the tap, he would say:

"What work do you do?"

"Useful work."

"Give me a letter."

"L."

"M," was the final answer.

The letters stood for *Libertad o Muerte*—Liberty or Death.

Betances managed to scrape up enough money to buy 500 rifles, six small cannon, some ammunition and a little ship called *El Telégrafo*. As the date for the planned revolution drew near, the plotters back in Puerto Rico were in trouble. The group at the town of Camuy was betrayed and all were arrested. As a result, the entire coastline of the island was reinforced. Betances, who had been about to sail from Santo Domingo with men and arms on *El Telégrafo*, was blocked.

Because of the arrests at Camuy, the other revolutionaries on the island decided to move at once. On September 23, 1868, they met near Lares. They had 400 men and a few horses. For the most part, their only arms were knives and *machetes*—sharp-bladed tools used for cutting sugar cane. They marched on Lares at midnight and took possession of it. Next morning they proclaimed the new Republic of Puerto Rico, named a provisional government and attended a solemn mass of

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victory in the local church.

The little army then set out to take San Sebastian, where they hoped to seize stores of arms and ammunition. There they met the Spanish soldiers. The ill-armed, ragged *jíbaros* could not stand against rifles, swords and cannon. The mini-battle at San Sebastian ended Puerto Rico's only armed rebellion.

In 1872, a tired Dr. Betances moved to Paris where he devoted himself to medicine and to scientific research, though he did not forget the revolution. In 1875, he returned to the Caribbean for another attempt. But when it became clear that there would be no revolution in Puerto Rico, he went back to Paris again in 1878, this time to stay.

His kindness never left him. A friend, the writer Luis Bonafoux, was with him one day when a sick man arrived all the way from Spain. Dr. Betances gave the man a note that would get him into the hospital and said, "Now, my friend, we shall get you well."

"Oh, I hope so," the man said, "because I want to go to Cuba and fight against the revolutionaries there."

He did not know that the doctor he was talking with was the official representative in Paris of the Cuban revolutionaries and spent much of his time raising money to help them!

Says Bonafoux, "A sad smile came across the kind Puerto Rican's lips. Then, collecting himself at once, he told the penniless patient, 'Here are 20 *francs*[6] for a start. Afterwards, we shall see what else we can do for you.'"

In 1893 Betances' health began to fail. When the United States declared war on Spain in 1898, he was an invalid. He lived to taste the bitterness of seeing his beloved island under the rule of another nation. On September 16, 1898, he died.

–Abridged from: Jay Nelson Tuck and Norma Coolen Vergara, *Heroes of Puerto Rico* (Fleet Press Corp., 1969).

Vocabulary

peso: unit of Spanish currency

jíbaro: country person

Borinquen: Arawak name for Puerto Rico

la Fortaleza: the governor's mansion in San Juan

franc: unit of French currency

READING

El Grito de Lares

BY THE PEOPLES PRESS
PUERTO RICO PROJECT

The exiled Betances and the Revolutionary Committees on the island fixed September 29, 1868, the Feast Day of Saint Michael, for the start of the insurrection. Slaves would have the day off and laborers would be celebrating. The rebels agreed that the best place to launch their attack was the mountain town of Lares. In Lares they would hold a tactical advantage over the Spanish authorities. San Juan was far away; the roads were in poor condition and would slow the arrival of government troops. In Lares too the rebels could count on support from the people, especially from the *jíbaros*[6] who worked on the surrounding coffee plantations. In the mountains, fugitives from slavery were ready to take up arms. Finally, Lares was selected because the town judge and the commanding officers of the militia belonged to the Revolutionary Committee.

Revolutionaries from both North and South America joined with Puerto Ricans at Lares. Mathias Bruckman was from the United States. Manuel Rojas was born in Venezuela where his father, a Puerto Rican doctor, fought side by side with Bolivar. Mariana Bracetti, known as the woman with the "Golden Arm," because of her bravery and her dedication to independence, was a leader of the Lares Revolutionary Council.

Lola Rodríguez de Tío, known as "the daughter of the islands," was a poet who used her pen in the cause of Puerto Rican independence. In the late 1860s she wrote the words to *La Borinqueña*, Puerto Rico's revolutionary national anthem. "I wanted the words to make people leave their homes and take up arms," she said. The song reflects her belief that freedom would be won through armed

Dr. Ramón Emeterio Betances with the first of the national banners, the Lares Flag. From a mural painted by Puerto Rican artist Fran Cervoni to commemorate the centennial of the 1868 Lares Revolt against Spain.

struggle, and that women would make important contributions to the independence movement.

In Santo Domingo Betances purchased 500 rifles, six cannon and *El Telégrafo*, a small ship. He and his crew prepared to sail for Puerto Rico and join the rebels in the mountains.

But on September 22nd, a week before the rebellion was scheduled to begin, Manual González, a member of the Revolutionary Committee at Arecibo, was arrested on a tip supplied by a paid police informer. A search of González's house yielded a list with names of rebels and plans for the revolt. Immediately the Spanish officials sent a message to St. Thomas. *El Telégrafo* was trapped in the harbor and Betances was held prisoner.

These setbacks reached the Revolutionary Committee at Lares. Mariana Bracetti, Mathias Bruckman, and Manuel Rojas took council and decided to attack at once. On September 23, 1868, six days ahead of schedule, 400 Puerto Ricans armed with knives, machetes and a few guns surrounded Lares and, after a short battle, marched triumphantly into the main square. The mayor and a few supporters of the Spanish Crown were arrested. Workers built fires and burned their *libretas*[9]; prisoners were freed from the jail. Slaves smashed their chains and rejoiced at their new freedom. Above the plaza two flags were raised—one made by Mariana Bracetti, the other a white streamer with the words:

Muerte o Libertad, Viva Puerto Rico Libre
(Death or Liberty, Long Live a Free Puerto Rico)

The patriots at Lares declared the "Republic of Puerto Rico." The Provisional Government issued four decrees:

1. All Puerto Ricans are duty-bound to fight for the revolution.
2. Every foreigner who voluntarily takes up arms on the side of the Republic will be considered a patriot.
3. Every slave who joins the Republic is free.
4. The *libreta* system is abolished.

Lares was a victory and a turning point in Puerto Rican history. The Puerto Rican nation was born. But the Republic at Lares was short-lived. Spanish troops armed with cannon overwhelmed the rebels and captured the town. Guerrilla battles were fought in the mountains and the insurgents were hunted down.

Mariana Bracetti was imprisoned in Arecibo prison where her new-born son died. Manuel Rojas and Mathias Bruckman were executed, hundreds of men and women were arrested and the cells of El Morro[9] were packed with *independentistas*[9].

A few weeks after the Lares revolt, the Cuban people also rose against the Spanish. *El Grito de Yara*, the rebellion that began at Yara, lasted ten years.

Betances was deeply saddened by the military defeat at Lares, but he, Lola Rodríguez de Tío, and other Puerto Rican patriots rallied to support their Cuban comrades. Lola Rodríguez de Tío worked with José Martí to plan the Cuban war of independence. In her most famous poem she wrote:

Cuba and Puerto Rico
are two wings of the same bird.
They receive bullets and flowers
in one heart.

The Cuban revolutionaries did not forget their sisters and brothers on Puerto Rico. Antonio Maceo, the Black general and leader in the Cuban war for liberation, promised:

> When Cuba becomes independent I will ask for permission to struggle for the freedom of Puerto Rico because I should hate to put down my sword while that part of America remains in slavery.

In 1873, five years after the rebellion at Lares, slavery on the island was abolished. But even this victory was bitter. The freed Puerto Rican slaves were required by law to work for their masters for three more years.

In 1874 the government created the Civil Guard, a special police until empowered to attack independence forces. For 15 years wave after wave of repression struck the people; public meetings were outlawed, the press was censored, the right to assemble was abolished. The year 1887 came to be know as "the year of terror." The Civil Guard arrested hundreds of people, tortured and bludgeoned them to death. But Lares was not buried. Betances' "Ten Commandments of Liberty" were a hope for the future, and the words to "La Borinqueña" ...

Let's go, Borinqueños, let's go now
Freedom anxiously awaits us
Freedom, freedom!

... continued to inspire the Puerto Rican people.

–Abridged from: *Puerto Rico: The Flame of Resistance*, by the Peoples Press Puerto Rico Project: Lincoln Bergman, Gail Dolgin, Robert Gabriner, Maisie McAdoo, Jonah Raskin (Peoples Press, 1977).

Vocabulary

jíbaro: country person

libreta: passbook which agricultural laborers had to carry

El Morro: 16th century fortress in San Juan

independentista: one who favors independence

Borinqueños: Puerto Ricans

READING

La Borinqueña
(The Song of Borinquen°)

BY LOLA RODRÍGUEZ DE TÍO

Lola Rodríguez de Tío

Awake, Borinqueños°,
for they've given the signal!

Awake from your sleep
for it's time to fight!

Come! The sound of cannon
will be dear to us.

At the patriotic clamor
doesn't your heart burn?

Look! The Cuban will soon be free,
the machete° will give him freedom.

The drum of war announces in its beating
that the thicket is the place,
the meeting place!

Most beautiful Borinquen,
we have to follow Cuba;
you have brave sons who want to fight!

Let us no more seem fearful!
Let us no more, timid,
permit our enslavement!

We want to be free now
and our machete is well sharpened!

Why should we, then, remain so asleep
and deaf, asleep and deaf to that signal?

There's no need to fear, Puerto Ricans,
the sound of cannon,
for saving the homeland is the duty
of the heart!

We want no more despots! Let the tyrant fall!
Women, likewise fierce, will know how to fight!

We want freedom and our machete
will give it to us!

Let's go, Puerto Ricans, let's go now.
For FREEDOM is waiting, ever so anxious!

Vocabulary

Borinquen: Arawak name for Puerto Rico

Borinqueños: people of Borinquen

machete: sharp-bladed tool for agricultural work (cutlass)

READING

José Martí: The Early Years

BY PHILIP S. FONER

Martí was born on January 28, 1853, in a humble two-story house on Paula Street in Havana. His father, Mariano Martí y Navarro, the son of a poor rope maker in Valencia, Spain, had come to Havana as a sergeant in the Spanish army. He married a woman from Spain, Leonor Pérez y Cabrera, and decided to remain in Cuba, hoping to find a better life there. He obtained transfer to the police force and served as a night watchman in Havana and other cities.

Although his father's meager resources limited his interest in his son's education, José's godfather agreed to pay for his studies at the Municipal School for Boys in Havana. At the age of thirteen, he entered the Colegio de San Pablo. Its director was Rafael María de Mendive, a revolutionary poet and journalist. Martí continued his studies under Mendive until his teacher was imprisoned, allegedly for attending a political rally at a local theater. A visit to his imprisoned teacher left an indelible imprint on the young boy's mind.

When the *Grito de Yara* echoed across Cuba, Martí was only 15, too young to join the *mambises*[0] on the battlefield. But he did write a long poem entitled "Abdala," glorifying the revolution, which was published in Mendive's journal, *La Patria Libre* (The Free Homeland). It was not long before Mendive was exiled, and Martí himself arrested. The cause of his arrest was a letter he and his best friend had written accusing a fellow student of being an apostate[0] for having marched in a parade with the Spaniards. The authorities found the letter, and on October 21, 1869, the two boys were arrested and confined in the Havana city jail. Four and a half months later, on March 4, 1870, the two were tried by a court martial. Martí's friend was given six months; Martí, insisting throughout the trial that he alone

José Martí

was responsible for the letter, received the harsh sentence of six years at hard labor in the government quarries.

Though still a boy, Martí spent six months in backbreaking stonecutting. It left him a physical wreck, half blind and with a hernia caused by a blow from a chain which troubled him the rest of his life. Thanks to army friends of his father, Martí spent only six months in the quarry, and was then transferred temporarily to a prison on the Isle of Pines[0]. He was finally pardoned in January 1871. Still half blind from the work in the sun and suffering from the hernia, he wrote to his great teacher, Mendive: "I have suffered much, but I am convinced that I have learned how to suffer ... "

To keep him from further seditious activities, the authorities deported him to Spain. On January 15, 1871, Martí left for Spain, and from then until April 11, 1895, when he landed with an expedition to head the Second War for Independence, he was to visit Cuba on only two brief occasions.

Martí completed his academic education at the universities of Madrid and Zaragoza. Yet while continuing his studies, he devoted much of his time to political agitation. Immediately after arriving in Madrid, he published a scathing denunciation of Spanish treatment of political prisoners in Cuba, *El presidio político en Cuba* (Political Imprisonment in Cuba). Written at the age of 18, it revealed Martí to be a writer of distinction, and it had an important impact on liberal circles in Spain.

On November 27, 1871, eight medical school students were shot in Havana on false charges of having desecrated the grave of a prominent Spaniard. On the first anniversary of their execution, Martí published a poetic ode to the martyred students, *El 27 de noviembre de 1871*. At the end, Martí emphasized that "there is a limit to weeping over the graves," and he called upon all Cubans to swear "an oath of infinite love of country ... over their dead bodies." The publication was reported to have had an electric effect on Spanish public opinion.

Martí had looked forward to the day when Spain would become a Republic. Then, perhaps, Cuba might live harmoniously and peacefully with Spain. But the killing of the students wrought a complete change in his outlook. The bloody incident destroyed forever all desire on his part for anything less than complete independence for Cuba, and he made a vow to devote his life to this cause.

–Abridged from: Philip S. Foner, ed., *Inside the Monster: Writings on the United States and American Imperialism by José Martí* (Monthly Review Press, 1975). This passage is excerpted from the introduction by Philip S. Foner.

Vocabulary

mambises: rebels who fought for Cuban independence

apostate: traitor

Isle of Pines: small island off Cuba's southern coast

READING

Guantanamera

BY JOSÉ MARTÍ

Yo soy un hombre sincero
De donde crece la palma
Y antes de morirme quiero
Echar mis versos del alma

Guantanamera
Guajira guantanamera
Guantanamera, guajira guantanamera

Mi verso es de un verde claro
Y de un carmin encendido
Mi verso es un ciervo herido
Que busca en el monte amparo

Cultivo la rosa blanca
en julio como en enero
Para el amigo sincero
Que me da su mano franca

Y para el cruel que me arranca
El corazon con que vivo
Cardos ni ortigas cultivo
Cultivo la rosa blanca

Yo se de una pena profunda
Entre las penas sin nombre
La esclavitud de los hombres
Es la gran pena del mundo

Con los pobres de la tierra
Quiero yo mi suerte echar
El arroyo de la sierra
Me complace más que el mar

I am an honest man
From where the palm trees grow
And before I die
I want to pour forth the poems of my soul

Guantanamera[0]
Guajira[0] guantanamera
Guantanamera, guajira guantanamera

My verses are a light green
And also a flaming red
My verses are like a wounded deer
Seeking refuge in the forest

I grow the white rose
In July as in January
For the true friend
Who gives me his hand openly

And for the cruel one
Who tears from me the life-giving heart
Neither thistles nor nettles do I grow
I grow the white rose

I know of a deep sorrow
Among all the nameless ones
Human slavery
Is the great sorrow of this world

I want to throw in my lot
With the poor people of this earth
A little mountain stream
Pleases me more than the sea

–Translated by C. Sunshine

Vocabulary

Guantanamera: woman of Guantánamo (town in eastern Cuba)

guajira: country woman

UNIT 9: Gunboat Diplomacy

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Describe some of the economic and political motives behind U.S. efforts to build a Caribbean empire
2. Seek out Caribbean viewpoints on U.S. military interventions in the region
3. Predict the impact of gunboat diplomacy on current and future relations between the United States and Latin America

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did some U.S. leaders want the United States to annex territories in the Caribbean and Central America? Which did they want to annex, and why?
2. As a Cuban, how might you have responded to the argument that Cuba should be part of the United States?
3. How did changes in the U.S. economy in the late 1800s affect U.S.-Caribbean relations?
4. What was meant by "Manifest Destiny"? Do you agree with this reasoning, or not? Support your answer.
5. What arguments were used by those who supported U.S. military occupations of Caribbean countries during the gunboat diplomacy period? What other reasons were there for the occupations? What do you think were the most important reasons?
6. What arguments have been used to justify more recent U.S. interventions in other countries? (e.g. U.S. involvement in Central America, the invasions of Grenada and Panama, the Gulf War.) What connections do you see?
7. What points were made in support of the American occupation of Haiti? How did Emily Greene Balch respond? Why was the occupation wrong, in her opinion? What do you think?
8. Can military occupation of another country bring freedom and justice to that country? Why or why not? As a Puerto Rican, how might you have responded to General Miles's proclamation?
9. Who benefitted from the U.S. policy of gunboat diplomacy? Who paid the cost? Consider groups of people in both the U.S. and the Caribbean.
10. How do you think the practice of gunboat diplomacy may have affected relations between the United States and Latin American countries today?

11. What is U.S. policy toward the Caribbean today? How does it differ from gunboat diplomacy?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Ask students to imagine that they are colleagues of Senator Beveridge in the U.S. Senate in 1900. After hearing the senator's speech ("The Divine Mission of America") they decide to refute the senator's racist arguments. Break the class into small groups and give each student a copy of the reading. Working cooperatively, students are to develop points in response to the statement. Each group will then draft a speech based on these points, concluding with a clear statement of what the mission of America in relation to its neighbors **should** be. The speeches can be read aloud in a mock Senate session.

2. Students divide a piece of paper into two columns. Label column 1 "Rationales for gunboat diplomacy" and column 2 "Real reasons." Students should list as many entries as possible under each heading. An example of a "rationale" might be **help other countries by building roads.** An example of a "real reason" might be **U.S. business gains access to cheap land.** Use the students' papers as the basis for a class debate.

Next, using fresh sheets of paper, students repeat the process for recent examples of U.S. intervention abroad. (See question #6.)

3. Divide the class into six teams and assign each one of the following countries: Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, Puerto Rico. Each team will create a history scrapbook documenting their country's relationship with the United States from the 1800s to the present.

Students should begin by outlining major periods and events to be covered. Help them to develop research strategies using local libraries, universities and other resources. The scrapbooks should include a variety of materials such as newspaper clippings, excerpts from books, political cartoons, archival photographs, and songs. Encourage students to look for documentation from the Caribbean, such as newspapers and books published in the region. A useful background source is *The Good Neighbor* (see Resources).

The materials can be photocopied and mounted in purchased or homemade albums. When the scrapbooks are finished, use them as a basis for classroom discussion of changes and continuities in U.S. policies toward the Caribbean. The scrapbooks can be displayed in the classroom or school common area.

RESOURCES

1. George Black, *The Good Neighbor: How the United States Wrote the History of Central America and the Caribbean* (Pantheon Books, 1988). Tells the story of U.S. involvement in the region through text, photographs and political cartoons.

2. A comprehensive history of U.S.-Caribbean relations is Lester D. Langley, *Struggle for the American Mediterranean: United States-European Rivalry in the Gulf-Caribbean 1776-1904* (Univ. of Georgia Press, 1976); and Lester D. Langley, *The United States and the Caribbean 1900-1970* (Univ. of Georgia Press, 1980).

3. William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1980). A thoughtful essay on the political and cultural roots of U.S. imperialism. Senior high and above.

INTRODUCTION

Gunboat Diplomacy

From the time of the nation's beginnings, many North Americans of European descent believed that expanding U.S. territory would be key to achieving freedom and economic growth. The settlers first pushed west and south, taking over lands of the Native Americans. They acquired Florida from Spain, and the Louisiana Territory from France. In 1846 the United States went to war against Mexico; Mexico's northern territory became the American southwest.

As this expansion approached its continental limits, many Americans looked south. In 1823 President James Monroe had warned European countries against acquiring more colonies in the western hemisphere. The "Monroe Doctrine" signalled the United States' intention to become the dominant influence in all of Latin America.

Not only influence, but actual territory was at stake. Some Americans argued that the lands on the United States' southern rim should be annexed outright. Southern plantation owners especially hoped to add Cuba and Nicaragua to the union as new slave states. An American named William Walker went to Nicaragua with a small army and involved himself in a feud between rival political factions. Gaining control over the Nicaraguan government, he promptly reinstituted slavery. He was deposed in 1857, and the American Civil War ended the southern states' plan for extending the slave system.

But the vision of a Caribbean empire did not die. American industry was producing more than the domestic market could absorb. By the 1890s, the U.S. economy was in a depression. Expansion promised new markets and lands for investment. U.S. companies, led by sugar and banana firms, began investing in Cuba, Jamaica, Nicaragua and other countries of the region.

A prominent military writer, Captain Alfred Mahan, argued that the U.S. must compete against European countries for new markets in Latin America and Asia. Reaching them would depend on the Panama Canal, then in the planning stages. Mahan urged the United States to acquire naval bases in the Caribbean that would guard access to the canal.

Although profits were at stake, advocates of expansion used other arguments to justify their cause. Often these arguments were crudely racist. It was claimed that racial superiority gave white Americans the right, even the obligation, to "bring civilization" to people of color. Influential figures, like Senator Beveridge of Indiana, argued that God had intended North Americans to rule the entire western hemisphere. This concept came to be called Manifest Destiny.

Many people in Latin America and the Caribbean wanted the opportunity to trade with the United States. But the great majority did not want to see their territory and rights to self-government swallowed up by American expansion. The United States was, one Puerto Rican newspaper wrote, "a dangerous neighbor."

The Spanish-Cuban-American War

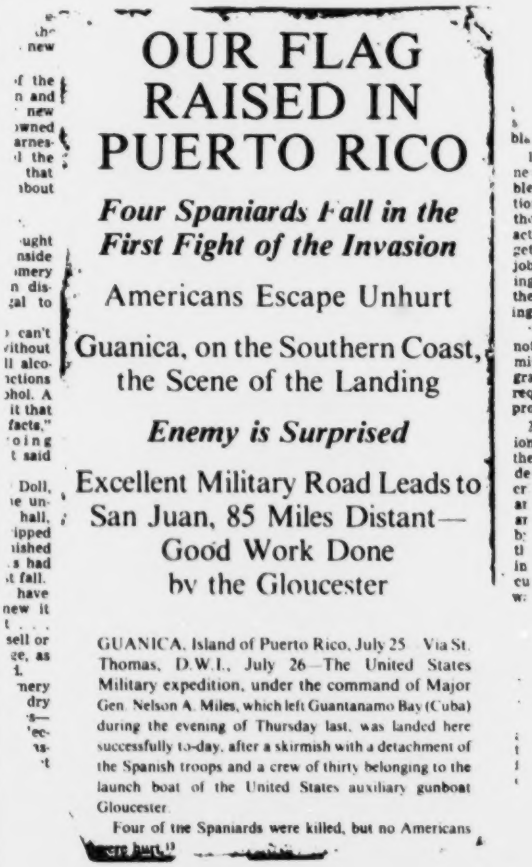
In the late 1800s, the crumbling of Spain's empire opened the way for the United States to move into the Caribbean. In Cuba, fighting between pro-independence rebels and Spanish troops was ruining sugar properties and hurting profits. U.S. business leaders called for the United States to enter the war as the quickest way to resume business as usual.

On Feb. 15, 1898, the U.S. battleship *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor, killing 260 crew members. No evidence ever proved Spain responsible, and a later investigation pointed to an internal explosion as the cause. But at the time, the event turned U.S. public opinion in favor of war. Under the battle cry "Remember the *Maine*!", U.S. Marines invaded and occupied Spain's remaining colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

Spain surrendered a few months later—to the United States, not to the war-weary Cubans who had been fighting Spain for decades. Under the terms of the treaty, Cuba became independent, but remained under U.S. military rule until 1902. During this time, U.S. authorities helped write a new Cuban constitution which gave the United States the right to intervene in Cuban affairs. The U.S. even established a naval base on Cuban soil, near the town of Guantánamo. José Martí's warning had come true: Cuba had won independence from Spain, only to fall under the influence of the United States.

Puerto Rico, by contrast, did not receive independence. Ceded to the United States as war booty, it became a U.S. possession. A U.S. military government ruled until 1900, when a U.S.-controlled civilian government, headed by an American governor, took charge.

The U.S. press and political leaders described American military rule as bringing many improvements to Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Americans built roads, ports and railways, and improved health services and education in the two islands. The main beneficiaries were not Cubans and Puerto Ricans, however, but American businesses. Under the protection of the Marines, U.S. companies used force, payoffs and legal trickery to acquire large areas of land in the two islands. On these lands they set up plantations to grow sugar and bananas for the U.S. market. Thousands of Puerto Rican and Cuban farmers lost their lands and had to become poorly-



OUR FLAG RAISED IN PUERTO RICO

Four Spaniards Fall in the First Fight of the Invasion

Americans Escape Unhurt

Guanica, on the Southern Coast, the Scene of the Landing

Enemy is Surprised

Excellent Military Road Leads to San Juan, 85 Miles Distant—Good Work Done by the Gloucester

GUANICA, Island of Puerto Rico, July 25 - Via St. Thomas, D.W.I., July 26—The United States Military expedition, under the command of Major Gen. Nelson A. Miles, which left Guantanamo Bay (Cuba) during the evening of Thursday last, was landed here successfully to-day, after a skirmish with a detachment of the Spanish troops and a crew of thirty belonging to the launch boat of the United States auxiliary gunboat Gloucester.

Four of the Spaniards were killed, but no Americans

New York Times headline, July 26, 1898.

paid plantation workers or emigrate to find work. When an American journalist, Charles Pepper, visited Puerto Rico in 1900 he found "a vast army of unemployed" and deep dissatisfaction with the American occupation.

Gunboat Diplomacy

With Spain's influence removed, the way was clear for the United States to build its own empire in Central America and the Caribbean. This did not involve colonies in the traditional sense, however. Instead, the United States intervened in neighboring countries when it saw its interests threatened. President Theodore Roosevelt announced this new doctrine in 1904, saying that the United

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States would respond to "wrongdoing" in other countries by exercising "an international police power."

Over the next 30 years, U.S. gunboats and troops invaded independent countries of the Caribbean and Central America dozens of times. U.S. leaders usually explained the invasions as "protecting American lives and property." The real reasons were not so simple. Most often, the Marines were dispatched when a country could not pay its foreign debts, or when political turmoil seemed to threaten foreign investments. Such a situation, U.S. leaders feared, risked giving European powers an excuse to step in and increase their influence in the region.

American troops occupied five countries for long periods: Cuba, Nicaragua, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Many people in these countries opposed the takeovers, and some fought against the occupation forces. In Nicaragua, which was occupied from 1912 to 1932, Augusto Sandino led a people's army against the U.S. presence. In Haiti, where the Marines stayed from 1915 to 1934, the practice of using Haitian citizens for forced labor caused widespread anger. Thousands of Haitians joined a resistance army led by

U.S. flag raised over San Juan, Puerto Rico on October 18, 1898.

Charlemagne Péralte, which held a fifth of the country. U.S. troops killed several thousand of the rebels, called *cacos*. Péralte was captured and executed in 1919.

The bloody campaign against the Haitian *cacos* provoked controversy in the United States. Black Americans were especially prominent in criticizing the U.S. occupation of Haiti. In 1926 the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom sent a fact-finding mission to Haiti. Their report, "Occupied Haiti," written by Emily Greene Balch, called for an end to the occupation.

Sadly, few Americans thought it important to consider the views of Caribbean people themselves. But some Caribbean critics of the occupations succeeded in making their voices heard. One Haitian, after meeting the women's delegation led by Emily Balch, wrote to her of his wish that Americans respect Haiti's right to self-rule.

Gradually many Americans began questioning the justice and effectiveness of gunboat diplomacy. The Marines were withdrawn from Haiti in 1934. President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced that the United States would become a "good neighbor," ending its practice of armed intervention.

But the new policy did not mean that the United States gave up its influence in the region. Instead of sending the Marines, the U.S. trained and equipped local military forces in the countries to safeguard U.S. interests. Before leaving Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, the Marines created new armies called "national guards." Local military commanders selected to head the guards or pro-American armies became extremely powerful. In this way the American interventions helped to create a new generation of dictators—among them Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua, Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, and Fulgencio Batista in Cuba.

READING

The Importance of the Caribbean

BY CAPTAIN A. T. MAHAN (1897)

To affirm the importance of distant markets, and the relation to them of our own immense powers of production, implies logically the recognition of the link that joins the products and the markets—that is, the carrying trade ...

The opening of a canal through the Central American Isthmus ... will induce a great increase of commercial activity and carrying trade throughout the Caribbean Sea. This now comparatively deserted nook of the ocean will become, like the Red Sea, a great thoroughfare of shipping ... Every position in that sea will have enhanced commercial and military value, and the canal itself will have become a strategic center of the most vital importance ...

Whether they will or no, Americans must now begin to look outward. The growing production of the country demands it. An increasing volume of public sentiment demands it ...

If the decision of the nation, following one school of thought, is that the weaker we are the more likely we are to have our way, there is little to be said ... If, on the other hand, we determine that our interest and dignity require that our rights should depend upon the will of no other state, but upon our own power to enforce them, we must gird ourselves to admit that freedom of interoceanic transit depends upon predominance in a maritime region—the Caribbean Sea—through which pass all the approaches to the Isthmus.

Control of a maritime region is insured primarily by a navy; secondarily, by bases from which it can exert its strength. At present the positions of the Caribbean are occupied by foreign powers ... A distinct advance will have been made when public opinion is convinced that we need them, and should not exert our utmost ingenuity to dodge them when flung at our head. If the Constitution really imposes difficulties, it provides also a way by which the people, if convinced, can remove its obstructions ...

–Abridged from Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future* (First published in 1897. Reissued in 1970 by Kennikat Press.)

READING

The Divine Mission of America

BY SENATOR A.J. BEVERIDGE (1900)

Mr. President, this question is deeper than any question of party politics; deeper than any question of the isolated policy of our country even; deeper even than any question of constitutional power. It is elemental. It is racial. God has not been preparing the English-speaking and Teutonic peoples for a thousand years for nothing but vain and idle self-contemplation and self-admiration. No! He has made us the master organizers of the world to establish system where chaos reigns. He has given us the spirit of progress to overwhelm the forces of reaction throughout the earth. He has made us adepts in government that we may administer government among savage and senile peoples. Were it not for such a force as this the world would relapse into barbarism and night. And of all our race He has marked the American people as His chosen nation to finally lead in the regeneration of the world. This is the divine mission of America, and it holds for us all the profit, all the glory, all the happiness possible to man. We are trustees of the world's progress, guardians of its righteous peace. The judgment of the Master is upon us: "Ye have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over many things."

–Abridged from: Speech by Senator A.J. Beveridge, *Congressional Record*, 56th Congress, 1st Session, January 9, 1900.

READING

A Dangerous Neighbor

EDITORIAL IN LA DEMOCRACIA, PUERTO RICO (1894)

The American nation is a dangerous neighbor, especially for Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. We must trust very little in her statements. We must not fall asleep, and must keep watchful eyes on the Florida Channel. Anglo-American traditions are not the most reassuring.

There you have Mexico, invaded and dismembered, due to the greed of the Colossus. There you have Nicaragua, where they arrived one day, stirring troubles and difficulties. The North American Republic is too powerful to relax her pressure on the weak Latin American Republics.

On the alert, then ... the United States urgently needs to establish a position in the Antilles.

Abridged from: Editorial in the Puerto Rican newspaper *La Democracia*, 1894.

Cartoon from around 1910 portrays President Theodore Roosevelt and his "Big Stick" of American military intervention. The United States invaded independent countries of the Caribbean and Central America dozens of times during the gunboat diplomacy years.

READING

General Miles's Proclamation

STATEMENT BY MAJOR-GENERAL COMMANDER NELSON A. MILES OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY, ON TAKING CONTROL OF PUERTO RICO IN 1898.

To the inhabitants of Puerto Rico: In the continuation of the war against the Spanish kingdom by the people of the United States, in the cause of freedom, justice and humanity, its military forces have come to occupy the island of Puerto Rico.

They come bearing the banner of freedom, inspired by the noble purpose of seeking the enemies of our country and capturing those that present armed resistance. They bring you the strong arm of a nation of free people, whose greatest strength is justice and humanity towards all those that live in its community.

Therefore, the first effect of this occupation will be the immediate break of your past political relations, and, we hope, a warm acceptance of the government of the United States. The principal objective of the American military forces will be the dismantling of Spain's armed authority and giving to the people of your beautiful island the greatest measure of freedom possible that is compatible with military occupation.

We have not come to make war against the people of a country that has been oppressed for centuries. On the contrary, we have come to bring our protection, not only to your persons but also to your property, to promote your prosperity and bring to you the privileges and blessings of the liberal institutions of our government. It is not our purpose to interfere with any of the laws and customs present which are good and beneficial to your people, as long as they are in accordance with the norms of military administration, order and justice.

This is not a war of devastation, rather one that seeks to give to all those under control of army and naval forces the advantages and blessings of an enlightened civilization.

Nelson A. Miles

Major-General Commander, Army of the United States, 1898.

READING

Report of a Special Correspondent in Puerto Rico

DISPATCHES FILED FROM PUERTO RICO BY AMERICAN JOURNALIST CHARLES PEPPER FOR THE NEW YORK HERALD AND THE ASSOCIATED PRESS IN 1900

San Juan, Puerto Rico
March 17, 1900

Military Officials Frankly Admit Sovereignty of United States Has Caused Death of Trade and Paralysis of Industry.

PEOPLE'S FRIENDSHIP CHANGED TO HOSTILITY.

Spaniards and Puerto Ricans Are Now United in a Deep Feeling Against American Government.

MERCHANTS WANT CERTAINTY

I have been looking around San Juan for a week trying to find out what is wrong.

American military officials told me at the outset that the year and a half of American sovereignty had been a blight on the island. This was not the echo of Spanish or of Puerto Rican feelings. They spoke their own views with soldierly frankness, and sometimes with a word of regret for their own position. Their talk was more pointed than when filtered through official channels.

Leaving for the moment the question of responsibility, no one can doubt the evidence of the senses. The blight is here. It spreads over the town and out into the country. Trade is dead, and mercantile and industrial activity is paralyzed.

Anti-American Feeling Steadily Gaining in Strength Under Conditions Harder Than When Spain Ruled the Island.

FOUND IN COUNTRY AS IN THE TOWNS.

Islanders Sadly Disappointed in Their Hopes of Prosperity Under the American Flag.

I suppose it is true that the Puerto Ricans welcomed General Miles and the American troops as friends, because everybody who was here at the time says so. But all that is past. Drifting around among the people the impression produced is a most painful one.

It is not exaggeration to say that they feel they are treated as a conquest by a nation stranger to their race. The difference in language, though it accounts for much, does not account for this feeling.

Nor have there been arbitrary military acts to create resentment. The military authority in operation is a fiction. No one feels its weight or complains of oppressive actions. The army officers are well liked by the people.

Nothing in the administrative personnel of the American authority provokes hostility. This is impersonal, and is directed rather vaguely against the government.

Not to know of this anti-American feeling would be to be without eyes or ears. I have

often wondered during these last few days if the American officials are themselves aware of its intensity.

A few hundred officers and civilians compose the United States colony. They talk their own language among themselves and exchange opinions, so that they are not in the best position to appreciate fully the agitation that may be going on around them among a million people who speak a different language. They might, however, gain some hints by having the newspapers translated to them. I have not seen one of these papers that was not voicing either open or veiled resentment against the government which is supposed to be in Washington ...

San Juan, P.R.
March 5, 1900.

LEAVING PORTO RICO

Unemployed Laborers Seeking Work in Hawaii and Elsewhere.

EXODUS A BOON TO THE ISLAND

It Has Greater Population Than There is Employment For.

THE INDUCEMENTS OFFERED

The surplus labor population of Porto Rico is being gradually, but permanently, lessened by emigration. During the past few months over 1,800 men, women and children have left for Hawaii, and if the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association does not cancel its order with the local agents, and if too much opposition is not raised here, about 8,000 more will be sent to the far-away islands ...

Other emigration agents are soliciting men to go to Ecuador to work on the McDonald railroad contract.

The first expedition will probably sail via Colon about March 15. Small parties of fifty or one hundred are continually leaving the island by steamer and schooner for Hayti and Santo Domingo.

The emigration of her labor class may be considered a blessing for Porto Rico. The island is exceedingly overpopulated and there is no work to be offered to the vast army of unemployed. Those who are left behind have more opportunity to better themselves, and those who emigrate, especially those who go to Hawaii, will be given permanent employment. They find the climate and style of labor the same as that to which they are accustomed here, and they are given free rent, fuel, medical attendance and schooling for their children, and besides are well paid, conditions for which they could never hope in Porto Rico ...

–From original clippings in the document collection of the Organization of American States (OAS).

READING

The Americans in Haiti

EDITORIAL IN THE NEW YORK TIMES (1920)

If Senator Harding should be elected President, he would inherit the Haitian problem. He has lately made an intemperate attack upon the American administration in the Black Republic, charging, among other things, that thousands of the Haitians have been killed by American marines.

On Jan. 16 of the present year an attack was made in the early morning by Cacos[0], outlaws from the northern forests, upon Port-au-Prince, and 176 of them were killed by the American defenders of the capital. The facts were published in New York in the middle of February. It was not pleasant work for the marines, but a lesson was taught the Haitian banditti[0], who were probably the tools of cowardly politicians in Port-au-Prince.

It is not to be denied that a considerable number of Cacos have been killed in the policing of the island, but to talk of the slaughter of thousands of Haitians is to be hysterical. Americans are not in Haiti to exterminate people, of whom there are 2,500,000, but to pacify the country, develop its valuable resources, construct public improvements, and set up an orderly, efficient and responsible Government. What the United States did for Cuba it is endeavoring to do for Haiti.

The most striking passage in Secretary Colby's defense of the American administration is this:

> The work which the United States undertook to do is nearing completion, and upon its completion this Government hopes to withdraw and leave the administration of the island to the unaided efforts of the Haitian people.

It is doubtful if the withdrawal can be made before March 4, 1921, for, although as many as 430 Cacos have marched into Port-au-Prince at one time to accept amnesty, there are said to be at least 3,000 of the outlaws still at large in the interior. The incoming American President will have to continue the pacification of Haiti, the building up of its industries, the instruction of its people in self-government ...

Since the Americans took over the country a constabulary of 2,500 natives has been organized, hundreds of miles of good roads have been built, Port-au-Prince has been cleaned up and modernized, and work has been made for thousands of people who had always lived from hand to mouth and in squalor. Everywhere public improvements are well advanced.

There have been mistakes, no doubt, and excesses may have been committed by men dressed in a little brief authority. But an honest and creditable work has been done by the American administrators for the welfare of the Haitians ...

–Reprinted from: *New York Times*, September 22, 1920.

Vocabulary

cacos: Haitians rebels who fought against the American occupation

banditti: bandits

READING

Occupied Haiti

BY EMILY GREENE BALCH (1927)

Before the events of 1915, when the United States occupied Haiti, the island was not much in the minds of our people, and although we bear a direct responsibility for conditions there, and have every reason to feel concern, it is not much in our minds today. A friend just returned from a West Indian cruise said to me the other day, "Americans in Haiti? I never heard of that. Why are they there? When did they go?"

Yet this country, the independent sovereignty of which is solemnly recognized by the United States, as well as by all other countries, and which is a full member of the League of Nations, has been occupied by the United States by force of arms, kept down by force of arms, and administered for 11 years, at a very considerable money cost to ourselves as tax payers and a much heavier cost, both in the world at large and more especially in Latin America, to our standing as a respecter of the liberties of others.

The most disconcerting aspect of the whole affair is that it is possible to do what has been done in Haiti, directly contrary as it is to all our principles and professions, without any popular demand for such action, without its ever being proposed or debated beforehand, and with so little realization in the United States that it has been done ...

Charges of Abuses

At first the people of the United States, absorbed in the World War, had practically no knowledge of what was occurring in Haiti, but sensational happenings in 1918-21 led to revelations.

... Secretary Daniels called for a report from General George Barnett for the period during which he had commanded the Marines in Haiti (July 31, 1915 - June 30, 1920).

This showed 2,250 Haitians to have been killed, and led to the appointment of a naval Board of Inquiry under Admiral Mayo, who had also served in Haiti, and a report, which, to quote Professor Thomas, gave the Marines "a reasonably good coat of whitewash, as everybody expected."

A delegation of Haitian citizens, representing especially the Patriotic Union of Haiti, came to the United States and presented a detailed memorial, but were refused audience by the Department of State. They made definite their charges of atrocities, supplying names, places and dates, and demanded the abrogation of the Treaty, and gradual withdrawal of the Marines. The charges laid before the Committee were the forcing of a new Constitution upon Haiti, twice driving out the members of the Haitian Congress because they opposed the Constitution, the use of forced labor in road-making, and connected abuses, atrocities committed by marines and gendarmes[0], prison abuses, martial law, and restrictions of the press ...

What happened was in brief that in order to get military roads built cheaply and quickly, the military authorities, in 1917, revived the legal but obsolete Haitian practice of forced labor for road-work. At first when the construction was near home there was little or no trouble, but when work came to be at a distance, unwilling workers were impressed, often very unfairly. They were sometimes manacled like slaves, compelled to work for weeks with little or no pay and inadequate food and shot down if they attempted to escape.

These actions combined with other abuses resulted in a revolt led by a man named Charlemagne Péralte, a wealthy landowner of an interior town, who had been punished for

alleged revolutionary activities by imprisonment, and work on the public streets in prison dress.

At first the outbreak was handled by the Gendarmerie[0], but by March, 1919, the Marine Corps took it over, with the Gendarmerie cooperating. The uprising was quelled in the spring of 1920, and is estimated by Americans to have affected perhaps a quarter of the territory and a fifth of the population of the country.

General Barnett's report for the period ending June 30, 1920, showed, as has been said, 2,250 Haitians killed, mostly in "battle." Haitians believe the real number was much greater ...

... There are still cases where abuse of power is charged, but the atrocities complained of in an earlier phase seem no longer to occur. If we had begun to go into these old matters we could have added nothing to what is already in the official record, and since such matters inevitably inflame the feelings, they draw off attention from what is, especially now, the real problem.

... The central problem is not how good is American administration in Haiti, but should the United States administer an "independent" neighboring country?

Conclusions and Recommendations

Haiti constitutes a clear challenge to all who believe in the fundamental principle upon which the United States is founded, that government should rest upon the consent of the governed.

The United States is at the parting of the roads. There has been for some time a drift toward imperialism, a movement veiled and therefore the more dangerous, dangerous to our own democracy. Our relations with Latin America are poisoned by the feelings roused by several instances of this imperialistic tendency on the part of the United States, and of all these instances our actions in Haiti are perhaps the most flagrant ...

To sum up the conclusions of the authors of this report, their impression of the present American administration is that its directing officials are honest, able and aiming to serve the people of Haiti, and that cruelty, abuse of personal power and violence seem to have been substantially stopped, and the whole tone of the administration immensely improved over what it was at certain periods since 1915.

The determining element in the situation, however, is the fact that it rests on force. This affects its character throughout. It tends to make the Occupation officials high-handed, careless of the law and, above all, contemptuous. It makes American rule deeply repugnant to all Haitians that still prize the independence that they have suffered so much to win and maintain.

Happily it is not the case that the United States is confined to the alternative of either occupying Haiti, or else regarding her necessities with indifference and unconcern. It is perfectly possible to be a good neighbor and help Haiti to attain health, education, public improvements and public order, by other less drastic, and ultimately more effective methods than military control.

The authors of this report believe that the Occupation should be ended for the sake of Haiti, for the sake of the United States, and especially for the sake of good relations among all the American republics, and finally because it is in itself an unjustified use of power.

–Abridged from: Emily Greene Balch, *Occupied Haiti* (Negro Universities Press, 1970. First published 1927.)

Vocabulary

gendarmes: members of a Haitian police force set up by the U.S. Marines

Gendarmerie: a Haitian police force set up by the U.S. marines. It was later renamed the Garde d'Haiti (Haitian Guard) and became the nucleus of the present Haitian army.

READING

A Haitian View of the Occupation

LETTER FROM A HAITIAN ACQUAINTANCE TO EMILY GREENE BALCH (1927)

Your letter gave me at the same time much pleasure and some pain. It seemed to me as if I were hearing you speak—that was the pleasure; and it seemed to me that we were misunderstanding one another—that was the regret. I had the impression that you were a little tried with me for not understanding your country and I on my side still feel that your country has not even begun to realize what Haiti is, not even distantly.

... You came and went like birds of passage; what you saw of things was necessarily their surface, a bird's eye view. You would have needed to experience for a year, or six months at least, what we are suffering, to have felt the same revolt of conscience at legalized lying and triumphant injustice, to have had a sight of what lay under the cards ...

Then only, then perhaps, you might begin to understand. You would have to read many books—and to forget them again, see many people, talk with old men and women, and get them to tell you about Haiti of the old days and compare and explain the past.

Think of the unique drama that was being unfolded here. The first cause of our financial and economic bankruptcy was the long-continued rancor of France and the immense indemnity demanded from Haiti[9]. Like a poor debt-burdened student beginning the world wholly without credit, Haiti had to live the life of a small and poor people in the midst of the hostility and sneers of stronger nations, without help or support. I affirm, and no one can contradict me, that what we have accomplished under such conditions is fine.

I know they throw the history of Haiti in our face—its long tissue of revolutions and massacres. Yet the American war with the Cacos[9] killed more people than 10 or 20 revolutions put together; it devastated whole regions and ruined the cattle of Haiti, as veterinary experts can testify if they are honest. Revolutions were fomented by foreigners—English, French, American, Dutch traders—who risked nothing, and always profited. Loans which dealt rather in human lives than in merchandise were made at rates of 1,000 percent, and those who thus enriched themselves overthrew any government that was not subservient to them ...

I know—and I do not excuse—the Haitian accomplices in all this, ambitious men, bloody men. Ambition blinded them, as it still blinds many others, survivals of a disastrous past who are still with us, to our misfortune.

For the honor of the Haitian name, for the pride that our elite have cherished, be it said that a succession of men of heart and capacity have continuously struggled and suffered for a civilized, a truly civilized, Haiti. The heroes who achieved independence had their successors. This is not sufficiently known, or rather it is persistently ignored.

Balthazar Inginac, finance minister under Pétion and Boyer; Boyer himself, a great president and a great statesman, who although beset by the greed of France, Spain, England and (already) the United States, yet ruled Haiti for 25 years and brought to pass the voluntary union of the whole island under one government; Edmond Paul, the great tribune and apostle of a liberal Haiti; Armand Thoby; Alcibiade Pommayrac, Justin Devot, Léon Audain, Georges Sylvain, Auguste Albert, (perhaps I forget others)—any country would be honored to count such men as these among its sons.

Efforts to help the masses have been made again and again and in many ways, but the

poverty of our budgets and the instability due to the causes mentioned made progress difficult and slow. Nevertheless a Haitian civilization was in process of development. That is what the men of your country do not understand. They came and interrupted it. They act like barbarians, for they have established nothing but a coarse materialism, the religion of money, the worship of force and success.

Although foreign domination is never a good thing, medicine teaches us that painful operations sometimes effect a cure. The American invasion might have been a good thing if, although unjust and even infringing for a time upon our independence, it had been temporary and had led ultimately to the reign of justice and liberty. But such is not the case. The Americans have not even this excuse. They have made themselves the allies of the evil past of oppression and tyranny; they have abolished liberty, justice, independence; they are bad administrators of the public funds; they offer a peace of degradation and subjection, shame and dishonor. They push forward like the rising tide; they attack our traditions, our soul. Is it not claimed that they want to change our culture, our religion?

Even the good that they do turns to our hurt, for instead of teaching us, they do it to prove that we are incapable. They are exploiters. How can they teach us when they have so much to learn themselves?

I should have liked to visit and know your country, for there must be sympathetic Americans capable of understanding all that I am trying to put before you. I should like to give the proofs of what I have been saying, and to show the facts that explain what I feel. It would have been an opportunity to fulfill my desire to make the real situation known and to try to scatter the clouds of misunderstanding, which separate our two countries, in the interest of both our peoples, so that the sun of truth may triumph.

–Abridged from: Emily Greene Balch, *Occupied Haiti* (Negro Universities Press, 1970. First published 1927).

U.S. Marine officer inspecting rifles of the newly-formed Haitian Guard in 1919. The U.S.-trained force was the nucleus of today's Haitian Army

Vocabulary

indemnity demanded from Haiti: France, the former colonial ruler, demanded that Haiti pay 60 million French francs in exchange for French recognition of Haitian independence

cacos: Haitian rebels who fought against the U.S. occupation

UNIT 10: The Cuban Revolution 1959-1962

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Explain why revolution occurred in Cuba
2. Describe basic changes which occurred in the Cuban economy and society during the initial years of the revolution
3. Appreciate the diversity of views on Cuba and how these are affected by a person's life experiences and social class

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. [pre-reading] If there was an economic revolution in the United States that prevented anyone from being very rich or very poor, how would you be affected? Would you support such a change, or oppose it? What would your concerns be?
2. Describe Cuba before the revolution. What was the main industry? Who lived well? Who suffered poverty?
3. How did the United States influence Cuban affairs before 1959? How did this affect life in Cuba?
4. List basic changes in Cuban society in the first few years of the revolution. For each, decide who gained from the change, who lost, and who was not affected.
5. Why did Mercedes Millán feel she was worse off after the revolution? Why did Sara Rojas feel better off? Do you think more Cubans thought like Mercedes, or like Sara? Why?
6. How does socialism differ from capitalism?
7. In the poem "Tengo," what do we know about the person who is speaking? What kind of life might he have led before the revolution? What is the most important change since then, from his perspective?
8. What is Lourdes Casal saying about Cuba in her poem?
9. What is a revolution? Think about revolutions which have happened in other countries such as the United States, France, Haiti, Mexico, Russia, China, Nicaragua and Grenada. What did they have in common with the Cuban revolution? In what ways were they different? (See Activity #2)
10. Did your image of Cuba change as a result of the readings? How?

▶ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. In the course of discussions for this unit, certain questions may emerge as especially challenging and divisive. Choose one question

which most concerns the class. (For example: Should a government place limits on how much property a person can own? Would there be a higher standard of living in Cuba if private industry was allowed? Even if people are living better, didn't they lose their individual freedoms?)

Encourage the students to do additional reading on Cuba, as much as time allows (see Resources). Each student will then develop a one-paragraph position statement on the question. Group students with similar positions into teams and stage a debate. This exercise may be repeated for additional questions.

2. A senior high social studies or global studies class can do a comparative study of revolutions. Divide students into small groups and assign each group one of the countries listed in Question 8. Using research skills, students will find out about the revolution which took place in their assigned country. Questions to focus on:

- What were the conditions in the country before the revolution?
- Who wanted change? Who wanted things to stay the same?
- Why did the revolutionaries succeed?
- Did the revolution receive help from other countries?
- How did the revolution change political structures in the country?
- How did it change living conditions?
- How did it change the country's relations with the rest of the world?
- What aspects of the society did **not** change after the revolution?
- What kind of society exists in the country today?

3. Ask a few students to do an analysis of media coverage of Cuba that can be shared with the rest of the class. Examine articles about Cuba in newspapers and magazines, and television coverage if possible. For each example, ask: Who is the author? What sources of information does he/she use? How might this have affected the author's perspective? What ideas about Cuba are stated? What ideas or assumptions are communicated without stating them directly? How could the author have obtained other points of view on the issues discussed?

Looking at the coverage as a whole, have students ask: What kind of sources are quoted or cited most often? What basic assumptions are taken for granted? What effect could this have on our image of Cuba? What might be the reasons for these media practices?

▶ RESOURCES

1. Hundreds of books have been written about the Cuban revolution, reflecting a wide range of perspectives. Some suggested sources:

- Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins and Michael Scott, *No Free*

Lunch: Food & Revolution in Cuba Today (Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1984). Examines Cuba's food and agricultural system as a way of assessing the revolution's achievements and problems. IFDP, 145 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

• Philip Brenner, William M. Leogrande, Donna Rich, and Daniel Siegel, eds. *The Cuba Reader: The Making of a Revolutionary Society*. (Grove Press, 1989). Anthology of selections on Cuban history, economy, politics, foreign policy and culture, including excerpts from primary documents.

• Philip Brenner, *From Confrontation to Negotiation: U.S. Relations with Cuba* (Westview, 1988). Examines the issues which separate the U.S. and Cuban governments, and argues for a change in U.S. policies.

• Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis and Susan Ridgon, *Four Men: Living the Revolution* (Univ. of Illinois Press, 1977). Also *Four Women: Living the Revolution* (1977) and *Neighbors: Living the Revolution* (1978). Oral histories by a cross-section of Cubans describing how the revolution affected their lives.

• Wayne S. Smith, *The Closest of Enemies: A Personal and Diplomatic Account of U.S.-Cuban Relations Since 1957*. (W.W. Norton, 1987). The former head of the U.S. interests section in Havana presents an insider view and critique of U.S. policy toward Cuba.

• Jean Stubbs, *Cuba: The Test of Time* (Latin America Bureau, 1989). A concise look at issues in contemporary Cuba, with emphasis on economic development. Available from Monthly Review Press.

• Hugh Thomas, *The Cuban Revolution* (Harper & Row, 1971). A detailed examination of Cuban history from 1952 onward. Thomas's longer work, *Cuba: The Pursuit of Freedom*, covers the island's history since colonization.

INTRODUCTION

The Cuban Revolution 1959-1962

After the war of 1898, the United States became the dominant economic power in Cuba. American investors and corporations owned Cuban land, sugar mills, cattle ranches, banks, ports, mines, railways—even the telephone and power companies.

With so many profits at stake, U.S. officials kept close control over who ran Cuba. Gerardo Machado, a corrupt dictator nicknamed "the Butcher," ruled from 1925 to 1933. After Machado was overthrown, Sergeant Fulgencio Batista took over as army chief of staff. With the support of the United States, Batista became the power behind a puppet presidency.

In 1952 Batista seized total power in a coup d'etat. He suspended the constitution, and jailed, exiled or killed hundreds of his opponents.

Under Batista's rule, a few Cubans got rich while the majority lived in poverty. Havana glittered with luxury hotels, gambling casinos and houses of prostitution, some of them owned by U.S. organized crime figures. This was the Cuba that American tourists knew. But in the rural areas, where most Cubans lived, hunger, disease and joblessness were widespread. Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins and Michael Scott describe these conditions in "On the Eve of Revolution."

Fidel Castro, a former student leader at the University of Havana, was a lawyer who defended political prisoners and the poor. A year after Batista's coup, he and others attacked the Moncada army barracks, hoping to set off a revolt against the dictator. The attack failed: Batista's police captured the rebels and shot many of them.

The survivors, including Castro, eventually were released from prison. From camps in the Sierra Maestra mountains, they launched a guerrilla war to overthrow Batista.

Despite Batista's abuses, U.S. officials viewed him as an anticommunist ally. They supplied him with weapons and military training. But Batista's army and government had little support among the people. Many rural Cubans joined the rebels; trade unions and students organized support in the towns. Middle-class Cubans and even some wealthy businessmen and landowners turned against the dictator. In the early hours of January 1, 1959, Batista fled to exile.

The Early Years

The new government led by Castro and his allies moved quickly to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. New laws placed a limit of 1000 acres on the amount of land that any individual Cuban could own. Property in excess of this limit was taken over by the government. One hundred thousand poor families received formal ownership of the lands they had rented or sharecropped. House rents were reduced by up to 50 percent.

Other policies of the new government aimed at racial equality. Facilities that had admitted only whites—private country clubs, beaches, nightclubs and other segregated places—were opened to all Cubans.

The new leaders also wanted to reduce foreign control over Cuba's economy. To do so, the government nationalized—took over—land owned by non-Cubans. To reduce Cuba's dependence on the United States, the government signed trade agreements with Egypt, India, Japan and socialist bloc countries. The most important was an agreement with the Soviet Union, providing for an exchange of Cuban sugar for Soviet oil.

Rebel forces enter Havana on New Year's Day, 1959. Sign says: "We are Cubans, and today more than ever, proud to be. Now or never, long live Free Cuba. Forward, Cubans!"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The land reform had taken away American-owned property in Cuba, while the trade agreements showed Cuba reaching out to the socialist world. U.S. officials and business leaders became alarmed. When the Soviet oil arrived in Cuba, the U.S.-owned refineries refused to refine it. The Cuban government nationalized the refineries. The United States retaliated by canceling Cuba's sugar quota—its right to sell sugar to the United States at preferential prices. Cuba nationalized the remaining U.S.-owned mills, factories and other holdings. The United States cut off exports to Cuba except for food and medicine.

Although many Cubans applauded the Castro government's actions, some opposed them. Soon after taking power, the new government executed several hundred people who had worked for Batista and who were believed guilty of corruption, torture or murder. Many other Batista collaborators fled to the United States. Wealthy Cubans, especially those whose properties had been taken over, also left Cuba. These groups formed the core of an exile community which strongly opposed Castro.

The Castro government made clear that it would not permit any opposition to the revolution within Cuba. It allowed only one political party. Of course, neither Machado nor Batista had permitted a political opposition to function. But some Cubans were disappointed that the new government did not install a multi-party system with private ownership of property. Many of them also left.

In March 1959, two months after Batista's fall, President Eisenhower had ordered the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to prepare a plan to overthrow Castro. To make the attack appear Cuban, the CIA recruited Cuban exiles in the United States and trained them for an assault. Aware of the planned invasion, the Cuban government prepared its defense. On April 17, 1961, the CIA's exile army landed at the Bay of Pigs, on Cuba's southern coast. Cuban troops turned them back in 72 hours.

The failed invasion did not end U.S. hopes of overthrowing Castro. For the next decade, the CIA, Cuban exiles and American organized crime figures carried out sabotage and assassinations targeted against Cuba. The U.S. also imposed a total trade embargo, cutting Cuba off from vital supplies of food and medicine. These efforts did not succeed in overthrowing Castro, but they made the task of economic development within Cuba more difficult. Faced with hostility from its powerful neighbor, Cuba increased its reliance on the Soviet Union as ally and protector.

The Impact of Revolution: Cuban Voices

By the end of 1960, about 80 percent of the Cuban economy was socialized, or in government hands. The Cuban state owned and ran sugar mills, oil refineries, factories and banks. The profits from these enterprises were used to develop the country. The government built roads, schools, medical clinics and houses. Education and medical care became free to everyone.

These measures meant that most people had more money in their pockets than before the revolution. They could buy more—more food, more clothing. This soon led to problems as the supply of goods did not increase fast enough to meet the new demand. Many things hindered production. The U.S. trade embargo cut off the supply of raw materials and spare parts; many skilled professionals and technicians left the country. Poor planning and management, and even bad weather played a part. Within a few years, food shortages were a serious problem.

Before the revolution, if an item was in short supply, its price rose, and only richer people could buy it. The new government preferred to share scarce goods fairly without regard to income. This new system was called rationing, and it was applied to essential goods such as milk, meat, shoes and clothing. A rationed item was priced low, so everyone could afford it; but each household could buy only its share and no more.

How Cubans viewed the new system depended in part on their circumstances before the revolution. Those who had lived comfortably, like Mercedes Millán, were now less well-off. They were unhappy with the changes in their lives.

But a majority of Cubans had been poor before the revolution. For them, conditions improved. Sara Rojas, whose family had endured grinding poverty and hunger, now could give her children an adequate diet. With education free, students from even the poorest families could go to college, opening up a new world of opportunity for Cubans like 17-year-old Genoveva Hernández Díaz. And for the many people of color in Cuba, like Leticia Manzanares, the end of racial segregation meant a different life.

Perhaps the deepest change was the sense among ordinary Cubans that **they**—not foreigners or wealthy Cubans—now owned the country. Nicolás Guillén, Cuba's leading poet until his death in 1988, captured this feeling in his well-known poem "Tengo."

Equally important was pride in having ended extreme poverty. Although Cubans continued to lack many things, no one went hungry or died for lack of medical care. For a third world country it was an astounding achievement, and one which many wealthier countries could not claim. Digdora Alonso, a founding member of the Federation of Cuban Women, expresses this joy in "Two Poems for My Granddaughter."

For many Cubans, even those who disagreed with some actions of the revolution, there was also pride in standing up to foreign control. Cubans had fought to abolish slavery and Spanish colonial rule. They had rid the country of a U.S.-supported dictator. Now, they would work to solve the hardest problem of all—building a society that would give all Cubans the chance for a better life. Poet Lourdes Casal, a Cuban who lived in the United States until her death in 1981, reflects on this proud history in "I Live in Cuba."

Cuba in the Caribbean

Revolutionary Cuba showed that an underdeveloped country could triumph over hunger, disease and illiteracy. It also showed also that small nations in Latin America and the Caribbean did not have to bend to the will of the powerful United States.

At the same time, the Cuban example demonstrated how difficult it was for countries which produced just one major export—such as sugar—to break away from dependence on that crop. Nor had revolutionary Cuba achieved self-reliance. Soviet aid and trade continued to be crucial to its economy.

As newly-independent Caribbean nations faced the task of development, some people argued that Cuba's radical reforms could provide a model. Others disagreed, pointing to Cuba's tightly-controlled political system. In addition, U.S. disapproval made it difficult for countries to consider Cuban-style changes. Yet the revolution's survival, so close to the United States, continued to provoke admiration, hostility and controversy, and to provide a continuing reference point for other countries in the region.

READING

On the Eve of Revolution

BY MEDEA BENJAMIN, JOSEPH COLLINS AND MICHAEL SCOTT

I,
Black Simón Caraballo,
and I have nothing to eat today.
My wife died in childbirth,
My house was taken away.
I,
Black Simón Caraballo,
now sleep in a vestibule;
I have a brick for a pillow,
my bed is on the ground.
I don't know what to do with my arms,
but I will find something to do:
I,
Black Simón Caraballo,
have my fists clenched,
have my fists clenched,
and I need to eat!

–Nicolás Guillén, "The Ballad of Simón Caraballo"

Observers around the world were surprised in 1959, when, after only two years of fighting, a ragtag revolutionary army of fewer than two thousand managed to defeat a well-equipped army of thirty thousand. But a look at the social, economic, and political life in prerevolution Cuba will help explain why the vast majority of Cubans from all classes supported the war against the Batista dictatorship, even if only a handful of them actually took up arms.

Detractors of the Cuban revolution commonly assert that Cuba was already fairly developed before the revolution. Cuba's per capita income in the 1950s—about $500 per person—was higher than that of any other Latin American country except oil-exporting Venezuela and industrialized Argentina. Cuba's "food availability" was outdone by few other third world countries. Even for "meat availability"—the ultimate benchmark in the West of prosperity on the food front—the island nation could boast of 70 pounds per person annually, about twice as much as Peru.

But for Simón Caraballo and the 1.5 million other landless farm workers[0], marginal farmers[0], and jobless Cubans, such per capita figures would have seemed a cruel taunt. Half of rural families tried to get by on incomes of 45 pesos[0] per month. And while 70 pounds of meat were theoretically "available" annually for every Cuban, in fact only 4 percent of farmworker families ate meat regularly, according to a 1956-57 Catholic University Association survey. Only 2 percent of the families consumed eggs on a regular basis. Only 11 percent regularly drank milk.

In prerevolution Cuba, as in most parts of the world today, diet depended on income. If you had money, you could eat as well as anyone in the United States or Western Europe. But in prerevolution Cuba, there was tremendous inequality in income distribution.

Since most Cubans lived in the countryside and tried to make a living from agriculture, control over land was a key factor. At the top of the economic ladder were the owners of the huge sugar plantations and cattle ranches which sprawled across the countryside. On the eve of the revolution, the largest 9 percent of all farm owners possessed 62 percent of the land, while 66 percent had only 7 percent. At the bottom were some one hundred thousand tenants[0], sharecroppers[0] and squatters[0] who owned no land at all.

Preventing landless people from "squatting" on land so they could grow their own food and make themselves less dependent on seasonal

wages was a "major concern" of the large landowners, according to a U.S. government report. In some areas, notably the Sierra Maestra where Castro set up camp during the war against Batista, squatters were driven off the land by armed agents of the landowners or even by the army itself.

For both rural and city dwellers, employment was critical. Some seven hundred thousand Cubans—one-third of the working population—were unemployed for most of the year. In addition to the landless farm workers, the poorest people included the unemployed in the shantytowns[9] of Havana, Santiago and other cities. For them, life was a struggle for survival, living hand-to-mouth, doing odd jobs, washing cars, selling lottery tickets, stealing, or begging.

There were also, of course, the rich, the tiny minority with the lion's share of the income. Historian Hugh Thomas estimates that there existed more millionaires, per capita, in Cuba than anywhere else in Latin America. More Cadillacs were sold in Havana than any other city in the world in 1954.

The rich in the big cities lived in guarded residential areas, tropical versions of Chevy Chase or Beverly Hills such as the zone known as "El Country Club." "Society is to be found in the Yacht Club by day and the Casino by night," an American visitor wrote in 1946.

The Poor Majority

In the countryside, two-thirds of the houses were palm-thatched huts without toilets or even outhouses. Less than 3 percent of all rural houses had running water, and only one in every 14 families had electricity.

In the cities, the poor lived as squatters in makeshift shacks or paid high rents for cramped tenements called *solares*. Recent arrivals to the cities lived in slums with such names as *Llega y Pon*, "come and squat." Minimum sanitary facilities were often lacking. One-fifth of the families, with an average family size of five, lived in single rooms.

Literacy and schooling reflected the same inequalities as living conditions. Cuba in the 1950s boasted four universities, although they were closed down in response to faculty and student protest during the final two years of the Batista dictatorship. But open or closed, universities meant little to most Cubans. The World Bank's data showed that "while 180,370 children start the first grade, only 4,852 enter the eight grade." By 1958, approximately one-half of Cuban children of primary school age (6 to 14 years) were not attending school at all.

Illiteracy was common: one out of four Cubans over ten years of age could not read and write. But this national average masked a significant rural/urban difference: illiteracy in the countryside was 42 percent, while it was 12 percent in urban areas.

Health services followed the same pattern of inequality. While Cuba had the highest ratio of hospital beds to population in the Caribbean, 80 percent were in the city of Havana. Havana province had 1 doctor for every 420 persons, but rural Oriente province had 1 for every 2,550. Unsanitary housing and poor diets made curable diseases widespread.

These enormous inequalities meant that while the middle and upper classes lived well, the vast majority of Cubans needlessly suffered from hunger and poverty—despite the fact that Cuba was a nation of rich natural endowment.

Dependence on the United States

Up to now we have only hinted at what was a major stumbling block for Cuba's development: its extreme dependency on the United States.

The Platt Amendment, forced into the Cuban constitution in 1901 during U.S. military occupation, gave the United States the right to intervene whenever it decided a government was not "adequate." The United States landed troops in Cuba in 1906, 1912, and 1917. Even after the Platt Amendment was eliminated from the constitution in 1934,

the U.S. government remained the dominant influence in Cuban politics.

Much of the Cuban economy was in the hands of U.S. companies and U.S. investments ran the gamut: manufacturing, commerce, petroleum refining, agriculture, mining, transportation, electricity, tourism.

Americans owned nine of Cuba's ten largest sugar mills in 1955, produced 40 percent of the island's sugar, and controlled 54 percent of the total grinding capacity. Cuban branches of U.S. banks held almost a quarter of all bank deposits. The telephone service was a monopoly of American Telephone and Telegraph. The U.S.-owned Cuban Electric Company had a virtual monopoly on electric power—and charged rates even higher than

Before the revolution, an estimated 25% of Cubans were illiterate. In 1961 the new government launched a literacy campaign. Here, a 13-year-old boy teaches an older man to read and write in Oriente Province.

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those in the United States.

Standard Oil, Shell and Texaco refined imported crude oil. Procter and Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive, Firestone, Goodrich, Goodyear, Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola, Canada Dry, and Orange Crush all had subsidiaries in Cuba. U.S. citizens, often connected to the Mafia, also owned many of the island's hotels and ran the thriving gambling casinos and drug trade.

Every year the U.S. Congress made the single most important decision to the Cuban economy—the "quota" of Cuban sugar that could be imported into the U.S. market at the relatively high prices of U.S. domestic producers. Over a 35-year period, Cuba exported about 60 percent of its sugar production to the United States. Cuba's economy was not only dependent on a single crop but on a single customer.

Under the U.S. quota system Cuba received a comparatively good price for its sugar (though for only a part of its total production). But there was little prospect that Cuba's share of the U.S. market would grow. Indeed, throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the amount of Cuban sugar purchased by the United States consistently declined.

Given the gross inequalities in Cuban society, the poverty and hunger, the disease and illiteracy, and the astonishing waste of agricultural resources, it should come as no surprise that thousands and thousands of Cubans from every walk of life took to the streets to welcome Fidel's band of revolutionaries on New Year's Day, 1959.

Abridged from: Medea Benjamin, Joseph Collins and Michael Scott, *No Free Lunch: Food and Revolution in Cuba Today* (Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1984).

Vocabulary

landless farm worker: someone who does not own land, but works as a field hand for wages. Traditionally a very poorly paid job.

marginal farmer: someone who owns a small amount of land and grows just enough to survive

peso: unit of Cuban currency

tenant: someone who grows crops on land belonging to another, and pays rent for using the land

sharecropper: someone who grows crops on land belonging to another, and gives the land owner part of the crop in exchange

squatter: someone who moves onto vacant lands for the purpose of living or farming

shantytown: area of poor shacks

READING

Living the Revolution

ORAL HISTORIES RECORDED BY OSCAR LEWIS, RUTH M. LEWIS AND SUSAN M. RIGDON

MERCEDES MILLAN

"These aren't good times we're living through..."

My life has changed so much! Before, we had everything, now we don't. I stay at home most of the time so it doesn't matter how old my clothes are. I wear the few clothes I have only to go out, so they last a long time. I had so many before that I still have enough. I can say sincerely that I don't worry about myself, but it's different with the children. They're growing, so their clothes don't last very long and their shoes wear out. You can't expect a child's shoes to last as an adult's do.

The worst problem is food. That's what really affects me, not the lack of money. There are so many things that are simply not available. It's worse for the children because adults understand what it's all about and can manage. I really hurts, though, to see that the children can't have what they need. I can't say we've ever gone hungry, but it's annoying to lack some things we really need or would like very much to have.

Meat and milk are the two most important foods in my home. We get one liter[0] of fresh milk a day for Eloyitos [her 3-year-old son]. He drinks milk for breakfast, lunch, in mid-afternoon, and at dinner. The girl gets six cans of milk a month, and my husband and I get three cans of milk a month each. So we have a total of one liter of fresh milk a day and twelve cans of condensed milk a month.

That's not enough. It doesn't matter if I don't have it, but we don't get nearly enough for the children. Some days we've done without breakfast because there wasn't any milk, and we never drink milk at lunch. We also have bread with butter for breakfast, if we have any, but we haven't seen butter for a long time.

These aren't good times we're living through, at least for us. Others may have now what they've never had before the Revolution, but not us. Only people who had nothing at all before the Revolution are better off now. We were never rich but we had what we needed. My children lack things I never lacked.

Naturally I know this is a process, a phase, and that we're not the only ones affected. Thousands of people are involved. Some have benefitted from the changes, while others, like us, have suffered. There's no point in saying that everybody is gloriously happy—you can't cover the sun with a finger. Happiness would be having all the problems solved, having shoes and all the food you need. My goodness, there are so many things I want!

It's all very hard, especially for people with our standard of living. As I said, most people here in Cuba are living better now than before the Revolution, but we aren't. I don't say this merely because of myself—it's my children I'm thinking of. They've occasionally had to do without a coat or a pair of shoes, or even food. It hurts when one's child says, "I'd like to eat such-and-such," and there isn't any. Knowing that we have enough money to buy it makes it worse in a way. I don't ask for luxuries, only for necessities, understand. Well, they say these are years of transition. I certainly hope so.

Vocabulary

liter: just over a quart

SARA ROJAS

"My children's lives will be different from mine ..."

I think the Revolution is trying to make a new kind of people, so I guess it must be a new idea. But as for communism, I don't know a thing about it. I don't know what it is or how it began. I know no more about it than if I lived in China. Somebody is going to have to teach me. What I do know is that before the Revolution we poor people had no money to buy things with and now we may have to stand in line, but at least we have money to buy whatever the stores get. For me that's the greatest thing the Revolution has done.

Since the triumph of the Revolution anybody can get an education for their children whether they're in the city or on the farm. Some little country girls who were brought here to Havana to study are now nurses and schoolteachers. They cleaned our barrio[0] of children, let me tell you. All the kids were sent to Havana or Santiago[0] or someplace else to study. That's one of the most valuable things the Revolution has brought about.

When I was young, my keenest longing was to study and have a career. I wanted to learn a lot so I could get out of that place. I wanted to be a teacher; when I was little I'd get other kids to play school and I'd be their teacher. I'd write down the letters and numbers for them on a piece of cardboard. It was nothing but a dream and I knew it. In those times it wasn't easy to give one's children an education. If I'd ever had the opportunities my children have now, I'd have been ... *ay*, something great.

It's such a joy to see one's children studying and know that someday they'll have a career. I feel very proud to have a son who's studying.

I always hear Fidel's speeches over the radio or TV, but I've never seen him personally. I love to listen to him because he never lies to the people. If there's going to be a food shortage, he tells us about it ahead of time. That's what I like about him—he's conscientious and never tries to deceive us.

The truth of the matter is that with such a large family as I have, if things were still as they used to be, my kids would be sleeping on the floor. The wages my first husband earned cutting cane would simply not have been enough to support eight children. When I was married to him I had only five, and even so they didn't have enough clothes and shoes. That doesn't happen now. When my number comes around[0], I can go shopping and buy whatever they need because I've got the money.

I have more food now than before the Revolution. Now I can buy my quota of rationed foods every month, but before the Revolution there were times when I didn't have a *peseta*[0] for food. When relatives come to stay without their rations I run out of food sooner, but even so, my children and I never go hungry.

My children's lives will surely be different from mine because they have opportunities I never had. With their opportunities and my brains, what couldn't I have done!

Vocabulary

barrio: neighborhood

Santiago: second-largest city in Cuba

when my number comes around: Certain items, such as furniture, were sold on a rotating basis to part of the population at a time. A household could buy when the number for its group was announced.

peseta: unit of Cuban currency

GENOVEVA HERNANDEZ DIAZ

"Nothing is impossible now ..."

Before the Revolution, women didn't have nearly as many opportunities as they do now.

If they weren't prostitutes, or mistresses to military men, it they didn't sell themselves to some boss or some dictator, they didn't have a chance. You may be sure the only other opportunity was to be a servant, scrubbing floors or taking in laundry. But now women are independent, free. A woman can work in the daytime, and if she wants to study, she can go to night school. Who ever studied before the Revolution? What money did they have do study with? What facilities for study were there?

Now a woman chooses her own goals and works toward them in her own way, and she no longer allows herself to be dominated by men. I mean, I don't let myself be dominated, and as far as I can see nobody else does either. If I'm about to do something that's right and good and some man says no, I go ahead and do it. Before, if a man said no to a woman, she had to obey.

I think a lot about the future. Nothing is impossible now, so whatever I propose to do, I can do. I intend to achieve a great deal; but then, who doesn't? Writing is my vocation. I'd like to be an excellent teacher but I also want to be an outstanding writer. My ambition is to write something that's good for our fatherland, perhaps about our Revolution, so that future generations will know how we lived. Someday I'll be one of its representative people. That's my dream and I know that someday I'll wake up and find it's come true.

LETICIA MANZANARES

"It doesn't matter whether you're black or white ..."

As far as I'm concerned, the Revolution hasn't made any changes in my life. I worked before and I work now. I see a better future for my children, though. Right now, the main problem of the Revolution is giving everybody food and keeping the children well nourished. We can make do with the clothing they give us even if it isn't much. Housing is a big problem too—there are many people in great need of a better place to live—but still, to me the gravest problem is the shortage of food.

Before the Revolution I sometimes felt it was unfair that I should have so little when others had so much. Oh well, that's the way things have always been. It's still happening. A lot of Cubans are living off payments for the houses they had before the Revolution. Others still have money from before and live on that without having to work.

Racial prejudice has changed since the Revolution. Now everybody can go to the same clubs and beaches. In that we're all truly equal now ... Before the Revolution the blacks and whites each had their own separate social clubs. For instance, in Morón there were three separate social clubs, the Colonia Española for the wealthiest whites—doctors, lawyers, and so on—the Liceo for white people who weren't so high up, and the Unión Fraternal for the colored people. And there was a fourth club, the Unión de los Ingleses, for the colored people who came from Jamaica and Haiti. There were many of them in the countryside working as farmhands and cane-cutters.

Nowadays colored people have better work opportunities, because they can study more. Before the Revolution only rich white people had a chance to study. None of the poor, black or white, could afford to stay in school long enough. Now everyone can go as far as they want in school and everybody has the opportunity to work.

Only yesterday the school director sent for me to tell me my two girls have the ability and the vocation for teaching. She wants them to get scholarships to study education. It would take four years, just like basic secondary school. If they get a diploma for teaching and later want to study something else, they can go to the University for four more years. I told the teacher I'd agree if the girls liked the idea.

My own life is already made and shaped, so

all my hopes for the future concern my children. If they get to do something worthwhile, I'll be at peace. I hope they take advantage of their opportunities to study and be whatever they like so they can be happy and secure. Nowadays it doesn't matter whether you're black or white, rich or poor—you can pick the career you want. You can be a doctor, a nurse, or anything else you like. That's one very good thing this government has done, and after all, it's one of the most basic things. As for the rest, one can always manage.

–Abridged from: Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis and Susan M. Rigdon, *Neighbors: Living the Revolution: An Oral History of Contemporary Cuba* (University of Illinois Press, 1978).

Cuban high school students work on a farm as part of a work-study program.

READING

Tengo

POR NICOLÁS GUILLÉN

Cuando me veo y toco,
yo, Juan sin Nada no más ayer,
y hoy Juan con Todo,
y hoy con todo,
vuelvo los ojos, miro,
me veo y toco
y me pregunto cómo ha podido ser.

Tengo, vamos a ver,
tengo el gusto de andar por mi país,
dueño de cuanto hay en él,
mirando bien de cerca lo que antes
no tuve ni podía tener.
Zafra puedo decir,
monte puedo decir,
ciudad puedo decir,
ejército decir,
ya míos para siempre y tuyos, nuestros,
y un ancho resplandor
de rayo, estrella, flor.

Tengo, vamos a ver,
tengo el gusto de ir
yo, campesino, obrero, gente simple,
tengo el gusto de ir
(es un ejemplo)
a un banco y hablar con el administrador,
no en inglés,
no en señor,
sino decirle compañero como se dice en español.

Tengo, vamos a ver,
que siendo un negro
nadie me puede detener
a la puerto de un *dancing* o de un bar.
O bien en la carpeta de un hotel
gritarme que no hay pieza,
una mínima pieza y no una pieza colosal,
una pequeña pieza donde yo pueda descansar.

Tengo, vamos a ver,
que no hay guardia rural
que me agarre y me encierre en un cuartel,
ni me arranque y me arroje de mi tierra
al medio del camino real.

Tengo que como tengo la tierra tengo el mar,
no *country*,
no *high-life*,
no *tennis* y no *yacht*,
sino de playa en playa y ola en ola,
gigante azul abierto democrático:
en fin, el mar.

Tengo, vamos a ver,
que ya aprendí a leer,
a contar,
tengo que ya aprendí a escribir
y a pensar
y a reír.

Tengo que ya tengo
donde trabajar
y ganar
lo que me tengo que comer.
Tengo, vamos a ver,
tengo lo que tenía que tener.

READING

I Have

BY NICOLÁS GUILLÉN

When I see and touch myself,
I Juan-with-Nothing only yesterday,
but today Juan-with-Everything,
with everything today,
I cast my eyes around,
see and touch myself
and I wonder how it all came to be.

I have, let's see,
I have the joy of walking through my country,
everything in it belongs to me,
I walk through my country,
inspecting the things I didn't have
and couldn't have before:
the cane harvest
the mountains
the city
the army,
Now forever mine
Now forever ours
Now forever yours.

A brilliant panorama
Of sun, star and flower.

I have, let's see,
the pleasure of going where I please
I, peasant, worker, humble man
I can go for example
into a bank
and talk to the banker
not in English
not as *señor*[0]
but as *compañero*[0] as we say in Spanish.

I have, let's see
that as a black man
no one can stop me
at the door of a ballroom or a bar.
Nor in the lobby of a hotel
telling me there's no room
not even the smallest room, let alone a suite,
a small room where I could rest my head.

I have, let's see,
that there is no more rural sheriff
who seizes me and locks me in jail,
who expels me from my land,
into the street.

I have the land and the sea,
no country club,
no discoteque,
no tennis court and no yacht,
only beach to beach, wave to wave,
gigantic blue open free:
in short, the sea.

I have, let's see,
that I have learned to read,
to count,
I have learned to write
to think
and to laugh.

I have that I have
a place to work
to earn
enough to eat.
I have, let's see,
I have what was coming to me.

–Reprinted from: Vol. 2 of *Obra poética 1920-1972*, collection of Guillén's poems edited by Angel Augier. (Havana: Instituto Cuban del Libro, 1972). Poem first published in 1964. English translation by C. Sunshine.

Vocabulary

señor: Sir

compañero: friend, comrade

READING

Dos poemas para mi nieta
Two Poems for My Granddaughter

BY DIGDORA ALONSO

1
Pronto sabrás que te llamas Vanessa
y luego
que Vanessa es el nombre
de una mariposa de colores.
Después aprenderás otras palabras
como
bomba atómica
napalm
apartheid
y tendremos que explicarte también
los significados de esas palabras.

2
Vanessa me pregunta qué es un mendigo;
contesto casi sin pensar hojeando un libro:
"el que pide limosnas."
Entonces, vuelve a preguntarme
y un poco molesta:
"y, qué es pedir limosnas?"
Dejo el libro y la miro
la miro muy fijamente
la miro entre lágrimas
la beso y la vuelvo a besar
y ella se queda sin saber qué pasa.

Mi nieta no sabe lo que es un mendigo
mi nieta no sabe lo que es pedir limosnas.
Dan ganas de correr por las calles
felicitando a todos los que pasan.
Dan ganas de salir por las calles
tocando a todas las puertas
y repartiendo besos.
Dan ganas de salir por las calles.

1
You'll soon know your name is Vanessa
and then
that Vanessa is the name
of a brilliant butterfly.
Then you'll learn other words
like
atomic bomb
napalm
apartheid
and we'll have to tell you
what those words mean as well.

2
Vanessa asks me what a beggar is
and absentmindedly, thumbing the pages of a book,
I say:
"someone who asks for alms."
Then she asks again,
more insistently,
"what is asking for alms?"
I put down my book and look at her
I look at her long
I look through my tears
I kiss her and kiss her again
and she doesn't understand why.

My granddaughter doesn't know what a beggar is,
my granddaughter doesn't understand asking for alms.
I want to run through the streets
congratulating everyone I see.
I want to go out into the streets
knocking at all the doors
and kissing everyone.
I want to go out into the streets.

–Reprinted from: Margaret Randall, *Breaking the Silences: 20th Century Poetry by Cuban Women* (Pulp Press Book Publishers, 1982). Translated by Margaret Randall.

READING

Vivo en Cuba
I Live in Cuba

BY LOURDES CASAL

Vivo en Cuba.
Siempre he vivido en Cuba.
Aún cuando he creído habitar
muy lejos del caimán de la agonía
siempre he vivido en Cuba.
No ya en la isla fácil
de los azules
violentos
y las soberbias palmas
sino en la otra,
la que asomó en el hálito indómito de Hatuey,
la que creció
en palenques y conspiraciones
la que a empellones construye el socialismo,
la del heroico pueblo que vivió los sesenta
y no flaqueó
sino que oscura,
calladamente,
ha ido haciendo la historia
y rehaciéndose.

I live in Cuba.
I've always lived in Cuba.
Even when I thought I existed
far from the painful crocodile
I've always lived in Cuba.
Not on the easy island
of violent
blues
and superb palms
but on the other,
the one that raised its head
on Hatuey's[9] indomitable breath,
that grew
in *palenques*[9] and conspiracies,
that staggers and moves forward
building socialism,
the Cuba whose heroic people survived the
sixties
and didn't falter
who's been
darkly, silently
making history
and remaking herself.

–Reprinted from: Margaret Randall, ed., *Breaking the Silences: 20th Century Poetry by Cuban Women* (Pulp Press Book Publishers, 1982). Translated by Margaret Randall.

Vocabulary

Hatuey: Arawak chief who resisted the Spanish takeover

palenques: guarded communities set up by slaves who had escaped from the plantations

UNIT 11: West Indian Independence

TEACHER GUIDE

▶ OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Analyze the impact of colonialism on a nation's economy, society and culture
2. Describe the challenges faced by newly independent countries
3. Identify advances made by the English-speaking Caribbean since independence

▶ QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

[Pre-reading suggestion: Read the passage from "Notebook of a Return to My Native Land" out loud to students before beginning this unit. Ask them to close their eyes as you read and concentrate on the feelings evoked by the text. Afterwards, have students describe their feelings as you make notes on chart paper. Explain that by the end of the unit, students should be able to explain the issues addressed by the poem and what the author's vision for the future of the Caribbean may be.]

1. Why did Caribbean workers hold strikes and demonstrations in the 1930s? Did they achieve their goals? Do you think they were justified in using these methods to obtain changes? Could they have used other methods—why or why not? When is violent protest justified as a way to obtain change?
2. When Trinidad & Tobago became independent, the new nation inherited many elements from its colonial past. Give some examples of how colonialism shaped Trinidadian society. Consider: governmental structures; relations between racial groups; national culture; the economy; the educational system.
3. Referring to the same categories, explain what changed in Trinidad after independence. What did not change?
4. In "Independence Day," the former leader of Trinidad & Tobago, Eric Williams, asserts that "There can be no Mother India for those whose ancestors came from India ... There can be no Mother Africa for those of African origin ... A nation, like an individual, can have only one Mother [and] the only Mother we recognize is Mother Trinidad and Tobago." Do you agree—why or why not?
5. What products do Caribbean countries produce? Who buys them? How is the price decided? If a certain item is not produced in the Caribbean, how do people there get it? How do they pay for it? Who decides the price? Explain how this situation can lead to debt, and the conse-

quences of debt for the people of the region.

6. What problems did the newly independent Caribbean countries face? What strategies did they use to address these problems? What has been achieved? What is still a problem?

7. In your opinion, would it be a good idea for the countries of the Caribbean to form a single country or join in a federation? Why or why not? What would be some advantages and disadvantages?

8. What are some ways the United States has influenced the Caribbean in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s? Compare and contrast to the interventions of the gunboat diplomacy era. Were these actions effective? Were they right? How might they affect relations between people in the Caribbean and people in the United States?

9. Poets Lillian Allen, Abdul Malik, Martin Carter and Aimé Césaire each project a certain vision of the Caribbean future. Compare and contrast the message and emotions in each of the poems. What is the author's purpose in each case? How does each poem make you feel?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Ask students to imagine that the United States has been ruled by the country of Quark (or other name of your choosing) for the last 100 years. As you make notes on chart paper, have the class list ways that Quark controls and influences U.S. society. (Examples: School classes are taught in the Quarkish language using textbooks from Quark. Most major industries are owned by Quarkish companies. Top-level government officials are Quarkish.)

When the class has listed several dozen examples, explain that an American independence movement is on the eve of a successful revolution. The students, as leaders of the movement, must decide what steps they will take after independence. How will they recover American cultural identity, establish self-government, and build a national economy?

The topic can be assigned as an essay or oral presentation for individual students or for students working in small groups.

2. Explain to students that they have learned about some of the ways the United States influences the Caribbean. Now, they will consider ways that the Caribbean influences the United States. Students are to examine the school environment, their own homes and neighborhoods, and the larger community for connections to the Caribbean. For example: Is anyone in our school from the Caribbean? Has any member of our class visited the region? Do many people from the Caribbean live in our city or town? Which countries are they from? How has their culture influenced our community? Check clothing labels to find garments assembled in Caribbean countries. Find foods at a grocery store (such

as sugar, mangoes, bottled hot sauce) which may have come from the Caribbean. Browse in a music store—is there Jamaican reggae, Puerto Rican salsa, Trinidadian calypso? Do restaurants serve Caribbean food? Do Caribbean nationals own small businesses or professional practices in the community?

The findings can be made into an exhibit incorporating objects, foods, photographs, articles and music.

▶ RESOURCES

1. Caribbean people in your community can be a primary resource for study of the contemporary Caribbean. There are hundreds of Caribbean-American civic, professional, cultural and student organizations in the U.S. and Canada. Students can invite members of such a group to address the class, or ask for advice or assistance on special Caribbean-related projects. Consider planning a Caribbean cultural day for the school, with Caribbean music and foods. Or ask members of a Caribbean-American organization to accompany the class on a visit to specific places or neighborhoods to experience Caribbean life. (For more suggestions, see *Caribbean Life in North America*, forthcoming in the Caribbean Connections series.)

2. Novels are an excellent way for students to picture life in Caribbean societies. The strikes of the 1930s form the backdrop for Ralph de Boissière's *Crown Jewel* and George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*. Trinidad during World War Two is the setting for Earl Lovelace's *The Wine of Astonishment* and Samuel Selvon's *A Brighter Sun*.

Merle Hodge's *Crick, Crack Monkey* explores class and cultural relationships in Trinidad through the eyes of a young girl. *Beka Lamb*, by Zee Edgell, shows how home, church, school and the wider world shape the outlook of a high school student in Belize. In *Angel*, Merle Collins tells the story of three generations of Grenadian women. *Lionheart Gal: Life Stories of Jamaican Women* presents autobiographical testimonies showing the struggles of Jamaican women today.

Many novels deal with the theme of migration. Samuel Selvon's *Moses Ascending* tells of a Trinidadian immigrant's difficult adjustment to life in England. *Brown Girl, Brown Stones*, by Paule Marshall, portrays the lives of Barbadian immigrants in Brooklyn.

3. To study development issues in the contemporary Caribbean, see "Suggestions for Further Reading" in the appendix to this book. Note especially: Carmen Diana Deere, et al, *In the Shadows of the Sun: Caribbean Development Alternatives and U.S. Policy* (a summary booklet is available); James Ferguson, *Far From Paradise: An Introduction to Caribbean Development*; Catherine A. Sunshine, *The Caribbean: Survival, Struggle and Sovereignty*; and Clive Y. Thomas, *The Poor and the Powerless: Economic Policy and Change in the Caribbean*.

INTRODUCTION

West Indian Independence

England's Caribbean colonies, also called the West Indies, entered the twentieth century quietly. No rebels fought against colonial rule; no gunboats landed to impose U.S. control. Yet in these societies, too, people looked toward the day when they would no longer be ruled by another country. Important changes were taking place which prepared the way for independence and nation-building.

One was the growth of a native-born middle class whose members sought a voice in government. These educated West Indians were doctors, lawyers, teachers, journalists and other professionals. They disagreed with the system which gave only wealthy property owners the right to vote and serve on government councils. They spoke out, demanding self-government for the colonies, universal suffrage, and programs to help the poor.

Workers and small farmers, who made up most of the population, also were organizing themselves in new ways. Marcus Garvey's Pan-African movement encouraged a rising racial consciousness in the 1920s and 1930s. Garvey, a Jamaican, formed the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which sought to represent Black people throughout the world. Garvey spoke out forcefully against racism and colonialism, and he urged people of African descent to unite as one nation. Garvey's organizing created links between people in the United States and the Caribbean, and his vision influenced almost all the Black movements which followed.

Marcus Garvey

There was also a growing awareness of the need for workers to struggle together for better wages and conditions. Throughout the Caribbean, people worked on sugar cane and banana plantations, in the oilfields, and on the docks for a few cents a day. Many others were jobless. Finally, in the late 1930s, their frustration exploded. Strikes broke out in nearly every English-speaking Caribbean territory.

Through their protests, the workers won important new rights. Laws were passed to protect trade unions, and unions formed in all the islands. Union leaders then formed political parties which could count on the workers' loyalty. Another victory was the granting of universal suffrage. For the first time, all adults could vote, regardless of how much property they owned. When elections were held, people flocked to the polls to vote for the new workers' parties.

The leaders chosen through these elections became island "premiers" and "chief ministers." They pressured the British government for self-rule. Britain had its own reasons for wanting to get rid of the colonies. No longer a source of profits, its Caribbean possessions were now a burden. Rather than grant inde-

pendence immediately, however, Britain doled out self-government powers step by step.

France and Holland, the other European countries which held Caribbean colonies, also faced demands for independence. Unlike Britain, however, they did not want to let their colonies go. Instead, they tightened the ties that held their empires together. France declared that its colonies were "overseas departments" of France. Holland created a "Kingdom of the Netherlands" in which Holland, the Dutch Antilles and Suriname were supposedly equal partners. In both cases, the colonial relationship continued.

Most of the British Caribbean territories were small islands. They would have more economic and political power if they joined together. They also shared a common language, history and culture. For these reasons, many people hoped that the West Indies could unite and form one independent country. In 1958, after years of planning, ten islands formed the West Indies Federation. But by 1962, disagreements caused the Federation to break up.

That year, Jamaica became the first British Caribbean colony to become independent. Jamaicans celebrated as their green, yellow and black flag was raised. Trinidad and Tobago followed a few weeks later. Next came Guyana and Barbados, in 1966. The smaller islands, such as Grenada, Antigua, St. Lucia and Dominica, gained independence one by one in the 1970s and 1980s.

Independence Challenges

Each former British colony was now a sovereign nation. Although they joined the British Commonwealth, they were no longer bound to England. They could establish trade

Getting water in a rural village in the Dominican Republic. Caribbean governments are trying to raise living standards, but many problems remain.

and diplomatic ties with any nation. Each country joined international organizations such as the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

The new independent governments were based on the British model, with the Queen of England as the symbolic head of state. A legislature, called Parliament, is made up of elected and appointed members. After each election, the party with a majority in Parliament names the leader of the government, or prime minister.

Joy over the birth of new nations soon gave way to the realization that the road ahead would not be easy. One of the first tasks was to create a feeling of national unity. Each territory included people from many different racial and ethnic backgrounds. As Prime Minister Eric Williams told the people of Trinidad and Tobago: "... only together can we build a nation."

Literature and the arts helped define this new identity. A new generation of authors, emerging in the 1950s and 1960s, wrote novels, poems and plays which explored what it meant to be "Caribbean." Caribbean popular culture, such as Carnival, received increased recognition. Annette Palmer, a Trinidadian living in Washington, DC, remembers how attitudes toward Carnival changed after independence.

Economic development was a pressing problem for the new nations. Their economies had been organized to benefit the colonial powers, not the Caribbean. Everything was geared toward producing sugar and other products for export; little was done to equip the territories to produce food and other necessities for their own populations. Schools were crowded and run-down, few social services existed to help the poor, and housing and roads were inadequate.

The new Caribbean governments took steps to improve life for their people. They built schools, enabling more students to get a high school education. The English-speaking Caribbean acquired its own university, the University of the West Indies, where students from all over the region came to be educated.

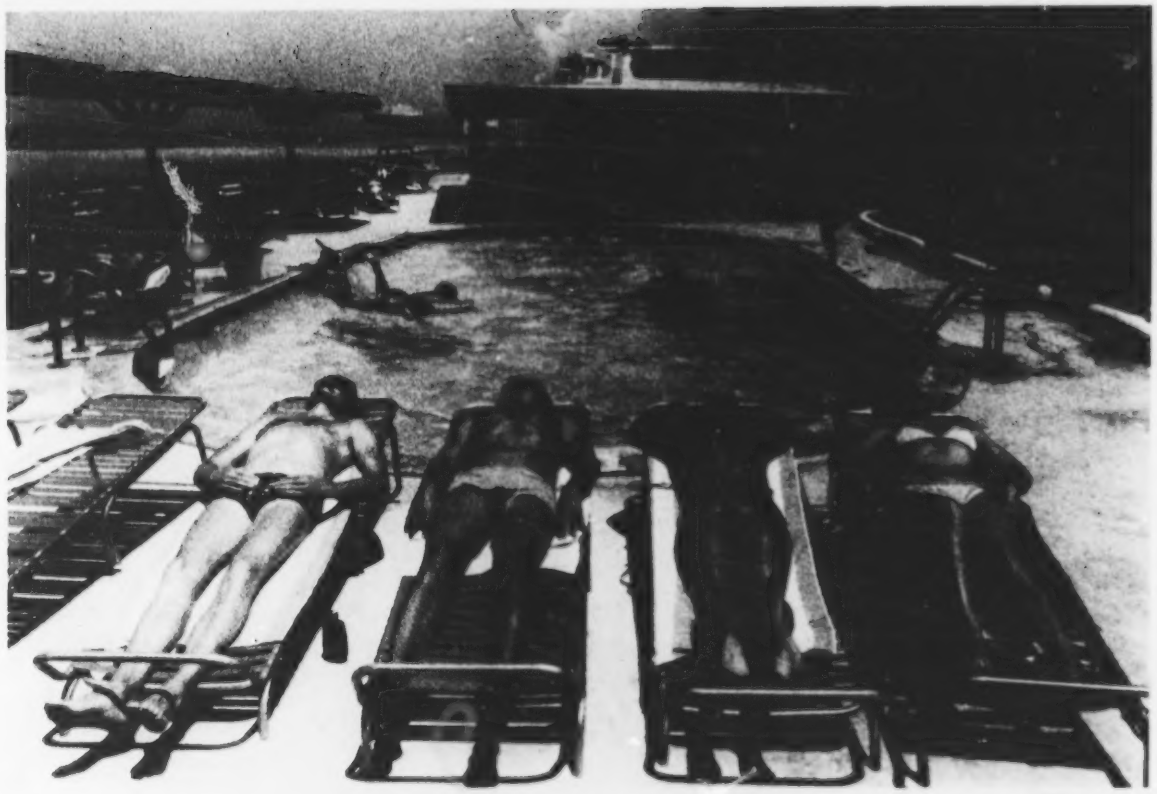
In an effort to strengthen their economies, Caribbean governments invited foreign firms to set up operations in the region. American and Canadian companies began mining bauxite, the raw material from which aluminum is made. In Trinidad, foreign companies including Texaco and Shell Oil refined and exported oil. Elsewhere, foreign firms set up manufacturing plants. Tourism became a major Caribbean industry, with many hotels owned by foreign investors.

The Caribbean countries received some benefits from this investment, but most of the profits went back to the United States, Canada and Europe. Although some jobs were created, unemployment continued to rise, especially among young people. Economic power—ownership of land and businesses—remained concentrated in a few hands. The gap between the rich and the poor grew wider.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a wave of protests sweep the region. Workers, youth and university students in Jamaica, Antigua, Trinidad, and in the Dutch colony of Curaçao, went on strike or held mass demonstrations.

The protests helped convince some government leaders to undertake changes. Under the slogan "Better Must Come," the Jamaican government led by Michael Manley created new programs to help the poor. These included a literacy campaign, a jobs program, a minimum wage law, and land reform. In Jamaica and other Caribbean countries, governments purchased some of the holdings of foreign companies in key industries like bauxite and sugar. They wanted the profits from these industries to benefit the people of the Caribbean, not just foreign firms.

The boldest experiment in social change occurred in Grenada. The Grenadian government had been led since the 1950s by a corrupt dictator, Eric Gairy. In 1979 a group of young Grenadians, most of them educated at



Tourists relax at a hotel in Barbados. Tourism is a major Caribbean industry.

universities in England and the United States, overthrew Gairy and formed a new government. Over the next four years, Grenada experimented with creative programs in economic development, health, housing and education.

U.S. Influence

In seeking new types of development, Caribbean governments had to consider the wishes of a powerful neighbor: the United States. The U.S. had used "gunboat diplomacy" earlier in the century to influence events in the Caribbean. The Bay of Pigs invasion, Washington's unsuccessful attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro in 1961, showed that the United States was continuing the practice of military intervention in the region.

Just four years later, another invasion confirmed the pattern. The Dominican Republic had been ruled since 1924 by the dictator General Rafael Trujillo. After he was assassinated in 1961, the country held its first free elections ever. The winner, Juan Bosch, ruling under a new constitution, promised land reform and other programs to help the poor.

United States officials, officers in the Dominican army and many wealthy Dominicans objected to Bosch's reforms. Seven months after Bosch took office, the Dominican army overthrew his government in a coup d'etat. The military junta which took over threw out the constitution and reversed Bosch's reforms.

In April 1965, dissident pro-Bosch officers handed out arms to the population, and a massive revolt swept the capital. Most of the population of Santo Domingo took to the streets, demanding the return of the elected Bosch government.

U.S. military police search residents of Santo Domingo after the United States invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965.

Days later, claiming that a communist threat existed, President Johnson ordered 22,000 U.S. Marines into Santo Domingo to put down the uprising. The fighting lasted two months. By September, the pro-Bosch forces were defeated. In new elections held under U.S. supervision, a candidate favored by Washington—and closely allied to the Trujillo dictatorship—won the presidency.

Although the Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries were the main arena of U.S. involvement, U.S. influence also increased in the English-speaking territories. In 1917 the U.S. purchased the Virgin Islands from Denmark and built a naval base at St. Thomas harbor. During World War Two, Washington traded 50 old destroyers to the British Navy in exchange for land in Trinidad, Antigua, St. Lucia, Jamaica, and Guyana. U.S. military bases were built on the land, the largest at Chaguaramas, Trinidad. West Indian governments, especially Trinidad's, strongly opposed the U.S.-British deal.

After independence, as Britain's influence diminished, Washington's increased. U.S. officials' main concern was to prevent Caribbean leaders from adopting policies that might appear socialist. In addition, they insisted that Caribbean governments should join the United States in isolating Cuba. In the 1970s, Washington brought pressure on the Manley government in Jamaica, which had declared its ideology as "democratic

socialism," and which had friendly ties with Cuba.

In 1983, the United States for the first time intervened militarily in an English-speaking Caribbean nation—Grenada. U.S. officials were angered by Grenada's ties to Cuba, and by the Grenadian leaders' refusal to defer to U.S. power. They made it difficult for Grenada to get foreign loans and aid, and pressured the country in other ways.

Finally, disagreements among the members of Grenada's ruling party opened the door to tragedy. At the height of the conflict, the prime minister, Maurice Bishop, and other government leaders were assassinated by members of the Grenadian army. Several days later, the United States invaded the tiny island with massive firepower. Many lives were lost, and the United States took temporary control of the country. The Grenadian experiment in social change came to an end.

Building the Future

Over the last decade, Caribbean economies have weakened, and living standards have declined. The downturn is due largely to forces beyond the region's control. To earn foreign exchange, Caribbean countries sell sugar, bananas, bauxite and a few other products to the industrialized countries. Prices for these have fallen on the world market, meaning less income for the Caribbean. At the same time, the Caribbean must import food, machinery and other goods, at prices which rise steadily.

When a country must spend more than it earns, governments often borrow to cover the gap. Interest payments on the debt consume more and more of the earnings from exports. To make ends meet, the government must take out a new loan. The country has fallen into the "debt trap."

A number of countries have turned for loans to the International Monetary Fund, a lending agency. As a condition of its loans, the IMF dictates the economic policies which countries should follow. These include raising prices for food, laying off government employees, and cutting back spending on social services such as schools and health clinics.

Such actions have had serious consequences. Unemployment rates range from 15 to 50 percent around the region. The rising cost of living has triggered violent protest in several countries. In "Conditions Critical," Lillian Allen, a Jamaican living in Canada, remembers the protests in Jamaica when gasoline and food prices rose in 1983.

The promise of independence at times seems dim as people struggle just to survive. For many, the solution is emigration. Thousands have moved to North America or Europe to seek opportunities, usually with the hope of returning one day. Poet Abdul Malik knew unemployment and poverty when he was growing up in Grenada and Trinidad. He expresses the anxiety of many Caribbean young people when he asks whether it is too late to "recast the mold," and transform the future.

Such a change, if it comes, will rest on countless initiatives by individuals and groups willing to break the patterns of the past. In communities throughout the Caribbean, women, men and young people are working to find solutions to the difficulties they face. They are organizing job-training programs, farm cooperatives, cultural groups and more. In doing so, they are building networks of cooperation and communication from country to country within the Caribbean.

Ordinary people, not politicians, are leading these efforts. Organizations of women, youth and farmers are growing in strength. If societies are to change for the better, everyone must become involved—a spirit captured by poet Martin Carter of Guyana in his simple poem.

The vision of a proud, secure nationhood for the Caribbean can still be realized. People in and outside the region have a role to play. While Caribbean people search for solutions,

people in the industrialized countries can give support—not for the ideas **they** prefer, but for the ideas coming from the region's people, who understand the Caribbean best.

In his "Notebook of a Return to My Native Land", the Martiniquan poet Aimé Césaire writes that the work of building the world has only just begun. For the Caribbean, the building of new nations and a prosperous, united region is the work for the decades to come.

Building a cooperative bakery in Dominica.

READING

Independence Day

BY ERIC WILLIAMS

Independence Day, August 31, 1962 finds Trinidad and Tobago no longer a great workshop operated by slave or semi-servile labor, but a miniature state. Two races[0] have been freed, but a society has not been formed. It takes more than national boundaries, a National Anthem however stirring, a National Coat of Arms however distinctive, a National Flag however appropriate, a National Flower however beautiful, to make a nation. The task facing the people of Trinidad and Tobago after their Independence is to create a nation ...

... Together the various groups in Trinidad and Tobago have suffered, together they have aspired, together they have achieved. Only together can they succeed.

And only together can they build a society, can they build a nation, can they build a homeland. There can be no Mother India for those whose ancestors came from India ... There can be no Mother Africa for those of African origin ... There can be no Mother England and no dual loyalties; no person can be allowed to get the best of both worlds, and to enjoy the privileges of citizenship in Trinidad and Tobago while expecting to retain United Kingdom citizenship. There can be no Mother China ... and there can be no Mother Syria or no Mother Lebanon. A nation, like an individual, can have only one Mother. The only Mother we recognize is Mother Trinidad and Tobago, and Mother cannot discriminate between her children. All must be equal in her eyes.

... Their history was in the past made for the people of Trinidad and Tobago. They were the subjects and the objects of that history. With Independence, the people of Trinidad and Tobago will make their own history; they will be active and no longer passive. There are many injustices to correct and many indignities to remove. But if colonialism meant the exploitation of the people of Trinidad and Tobago with others growing fat on the fruits of their sweated labor, Independence means not that they must work less, but that they must work more, not for others, but for themselves.

–Abridged from: Eric Williams, *History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago* (Andre Deutsch, 1964).

Vocabulary

two races: Williams is referring to Trinidadians of African and Indian descent

READING

"We Were All Trinidadians ..."

INTERVIEW WITH ANNETTE PALMER

I was 21 when Trinidad and Tobago became independent. I was studying to be a teacher, and a number of us were asked to be guides for the guests who came from abroad for the independence celebrations. Each of us was attached to a party of foreign visitors and went with them everywhere. I accompanied Lord Pitt and his wife, who had come from England, although they were originally from the West Indies. We were supposed to know the history, geography and culture of Trinidad and Tobago so that we could tell the foreign visitors anything they wanted to know.

It was very exciting. Jamaica had become independent a few weeks before, and we felt that now Trinidad was joining the "big leagues" too. There were calypso° and steelband° competitions, and an event for schoolchildren where the prime minister spoke. At midnight they had the flag-raising ceremony, when the British flag was lowered and the Trinidad and Tobago flag was raised.

When Trinidad was still a colony, I never really felt oppressed or exploited. One thing that had always been stressed to me was the importance of education. My parents were both teachers, and we grew up knowing that you had to get a good education in order to

Students check out library books at Barbados Community College in 1972. Access to education expanded after independence in the English-speaking Caribbean.

progress. Once you did, there seemed to be no limit on what you could become.

Under colonialism, though, the opportunities did not exist in Trinidad and Tobago. You had to go abroad—to England—to get your education. We thought that with independence, new opportunities would become available in Trinidad. The prime minister, Dr. Eric Williams, was talking about expanding the University of the West Indies, and about training new teachers. There would also be more government scholarships for people to go abroad and study, so that they could come back and help build the nation.

Before independence, almost everyone who left Trinidad to study went to England. But by the mid-1960s, it was becoming easier and more desirable to go to the United States or Canada. My mother decided that we would go to university in Canada, so the whole family moved.

Were there changes after independence aimed at building people's consciousness of being a nation?

Yes. The prime minister, for example, talked frequently about how we refer to each other. In Trinidad and Tobago there is a large East Indian population and a large Black population. Indians were referred to as "coolies" and Black people were referred to as "niggers," and both terms were used disparagingly. The prime minister stressed that we were to stop using these terms. A similar idea came across in calypsos and in plays: "All o' we is one." We are all one. It didn't matter if you were Black or Indian, we were all Trinidadians.

Another theme was "Production." The idea was that you should go to work, or to school, and **really** work. You should produce to build the nation. The prime minister told us we hadn't been producing as we should, that we had the potential to do more.

Did independence bring changes in Trinidadian culture?

The changes didn't start with independence; it was an ongoing process. There was an increasing effort to value and respect our own culture. West Indian writers started gaining recognition in the 1950s: Trinidadians like V.S. Naipaul and Samuel Selvon, Mittelholzer of Guyana, Derek Walcott of St. Lucia, and others. They wrote on themes they were familiar with, set their stories in familiar places. Schoolchildren read the books of these Caribbean writers, not instead of, but together with the European writers they had studied before.

I'm not sure when these changes began because in our house it had started long before. I read the novels of Naipaul and Selvon while I was still in high school. I borrowed them from the library. Books were very expensive, and in our house there weren't many extra dollars for books that were not required in school.

Then too, there were groups that performed plays by Caribbean playwrights, like Derek Walcott's *Ti-Jean and His Brothers*. People were exposed to this sort of thing even before independence.

Independence increased the recognition that Trinidadian writers received. More people started writing because more people could get their work published, and more people would buy the books.

Carnival[0], steelband and calypso, which at one time had been considered rowdy and vulgar, also gained new respect. I'll tell you a funny story about that. I went to a convent high school. One year, after Carnival, we had a school assembly, and the nuns announced the names of all the girls who had participated in Carnival—"played mas," as we called it. To play mas, you wore a costume—some were quite scanty—and danced in the street. This was not the thing that convent girls did! One girl had even been a flagwoman in the band—that was the person who went before

the band with a flag and danced, a dance that could be considered slightly lewd.

They read off the list of offenders and asked them to stand in front of the assembly. The girls weren't expelled, but they were forbidden from wearing the school uniform. It was said that they had disgraced the uniform and given up the right to wear it! The one who had been a flagwoman, she came to school in her dresses and didn't act like she was ashamed. You had to admire her.

That was how things were in those days. Middle-class people simply were not expected to participate in what was considered lower-class entertainment.

But attitudes were changing even then. Increasingly, people were seeing that there was not very much harm in playing mas, and that playing mas was part of what we were all about.

When I was a child, people played "history mas," in which somebody would research the history of, let us say, Henry the Eighth and his court. They would create costumes based on how Henry the Eighth and his court had dressed. People spent a lot of money on costumes, and some of them were quite elaborate.

After independence, the government began to keep some of the best costumes. They sent them to New York, Toronto and London, so that people could admire them. They also made the Carnival competitions bigger and gave prizes for the best costume and best band.

When I tell my nieces how we were punished because playing mas was a disgrace, they laugh because they can't imagine it. They're going to convent school and they are also participating in Carnival, because now it is recognized as a national festival.

Interview by Catherine A. Sunshine with Annette Palmer, Washington, DC, January 9, 1991. Annette Palmer is an administrator in the Division of Education Programs, National Endowment for the Humanities.

Vocabulary

calypso: music, typically Trinidadian, marked by lively tunes and witty social commentary

steelband: music played on instruments made from metal oil drums

Carnival: festival of parades, masquerades and music held in the three days before Lent

READING

"The Solution Would Be A Federation ..."

INTERVIEW WITH KEITH Q. WARNER

When you were growing up in Trinidad, what did colonialism mean to you?

It meant that everything British was automatically better, or so we thought. Everyone wanted to go to England, because that was the "mother country." My mother, for example, left Trinidad in 1956 as part of a huge wave of Caribbean people emigrating to England.

In Trinidad we celebrated the British Queen's birthday, and if Princess Margaret or Princess Somebody came to Trinidad, you waved your little Union Jack and sang "God Save the Queen" and "Rule Brittania." I remember when the Queen was crowned, we decorated our houses with red, white and blue streamers and bulbs. That is the most vivid memory I have of colonialism.

Did you question that at the time?

No, we didn't. Our consciousness was not that open yet. My father was avidly royalist[9], and he was a policeman, so he served His Majesty. We felt this was the thing to do.

Remember that in Trinidad and Tobago there was no major independence movement. Eric Williams, who was premier, went to England to negotiate, and he was seen as a hero for wresting the country from the British. But independence was not something the country marched or fought for. We wanted to get rid of Britain and handle our own affairs. The British realized that the time had come to divest themselves of the burden of having colonies. It was a gentle parting of the ways.

I was 19 when Trinidad and Tobago became independent. I was in France studying, but I followed events quite closely. I went home to Trinidad shortly afterwards, in 1963.

What kinds of changes did you find?

There was a new flag, and a new national anthem. There was the feeling that we were now in control of our own destiny.

Internationally, Trinidad and Tobago set up embassies in countries like America. The countries which had consulates in Trinidad upgraded them to embassies.

Yet at another level, there seemed to be very little change. Many of the colonial institutions carried over into the independent institutions. The government offices that had been set up by the colonial power were still there. It took forever to change some of the laws that had been passed by the British, and I doubt that all of them have been changed even now. To this day, the ultimate court of appeals for Trinidadians and Tobagonians is still the Privy Council in England. The education system is another example. We kept the British style of examining, and a lot of the exams still come in from England.

Many streets in Trinidad and Tobago have kept their old names. For example, we have Princess Margaret Highway, and we have Lady Young Road, a very picturesque drive from Port-of-Spain into the hills. We have the Beetham Highway, named for one of the British colonial governors. There is Kitchener Street, named for the commander of the British forces in the Anglo-Boer War in South Africa. We have remembrances of all these colonial people. It is only lately that we have begun naming streets and buildings for famous Trinidadians, like Tubal Uriah Butler, the labor leader, and Eric Williams, the first prime minister.

If so much stayed the same, is it still important for Caribbean countries to be independent rather than colonies?

It is, because you have a new generation coming along. Young Trinidadians and Tobagonians who have gone through the schools have learned new ways of thinking. One cannot continue to entrap the minds of all these young people with colonial ideas.

Many of the textbooks the schools used before independence were written by Englishmen or Americans and were full of, frankly, misinformation. They had a stereotypical view of the Caribbean. They might have seemed fine in America, but when you looked at them from the Caribbean perspective, you'd say, "Wait a minute. We are being told that this is what we do; we don't do it that way!"

Since independence, we have produced, gradually, our own textbooks and our own literature. In this way we help students understand what it means to be a Caribbean or Trinidadian or Jamaican person, from a genuinely Caribbean perspective.

Young people growing up in Trinidad and Tobago today are not oriented to Britain, the colonial power, the way I was. It is not automatic that they would want to go to Britain. However, many of them want to go to America instead. Not because they prefer America as another colonial power, but because of the economic conditions in the Caribbean. Youth in Trinidad and Tobago are very aware of the problems we've got, namely, the drug problem that's beginning to hit us, and unemployment.

What are some of the difficulties a country like Trinidad and Tobago faces as an independent nation?

There are a lot of things you have no control over. Most important, you do not control the price you get for your exports, like sugar or oil. Trinidad and Tobago, for example, is an oil producer. Our economy depends on refining and selling oil. But the oil in Trinidad is a minuscule percentage of oil worldwide, something like .01 percent of world production; we can't even join OPEC. So we have no say in setting world oil prices, and no control over the price we get for our oil.

In the 1970s, the world price of oil increased dramatically. Suddenly, Trinidad was earning a huge amount of money from its oil. For about a decade we swam in money. Unemployment went down, people were able to afford all sorts of luxuries, and we boasted that money was no problem. Our per capita income was higher than Canada's at one point.

But by 1983 or 1984, the bottom fell out of the oil market. The price of oil plunged on the world market. And along with it, bang, the whole Trinidad economy went down.

Now, unemployment is rampant in Trinidad and Tobago. It's sad to see what the country has come to after so much prosperity. People are finding it very difficult because, of course, expectations rise quickly but they fall very slowly. We joke that "It's difficult to tighten your belt when the belt is a Gucci." It was not made for tightening.

What happened with the oil is a classic example of the fact that we in the Caribbean don't control our own economies. The problems are similar with other economic sectors, for example tourism. The minute anything hints at political unrest, tourism falls off. Or if another part of the world is more fashionable, the tourists go there instead. For example, a lot of people are visiting Eastern Europe now, and that has had a negative effect on tourism in the Caribbean. There are so many things that you have no control over.

All these problems have made the independence road a difficult one for our countries. If you are going to elevate the standard of living of your people, you have to have money. Roads don't build themselves, buildings don't maintain themselves, health clinics and hospitals don't run on air.

A usual strategy is to try to attract foreign investment. You give tax exemptions to shirt manufacturers or baseball manufacturers or

somebody else who comes down from America and sets up branch plants in the Caribbean because labor is much cheaper. American Airlines, for example, does a lot of the processing of its tickets in Barbados. A lot of baseballs are made in Haiti.

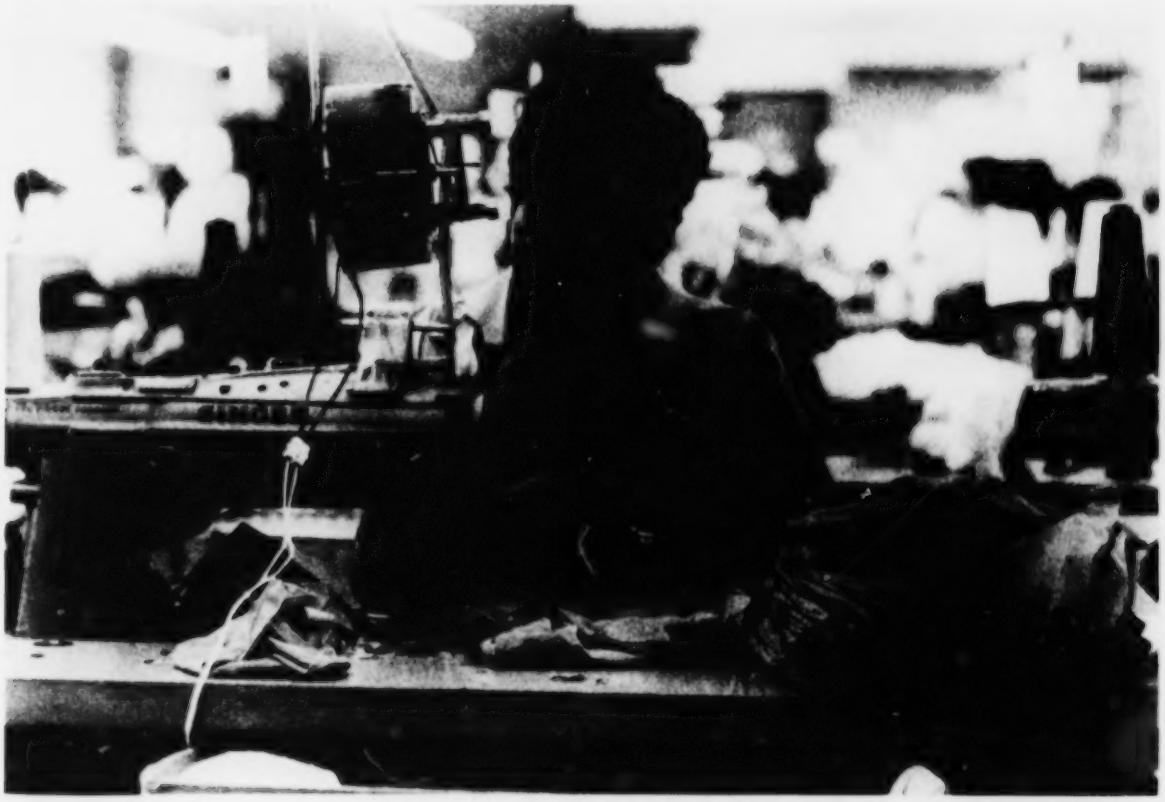
Such factories aren't really a solution, though. They pay low wages. They can't make up for the income a country loses when the price of its major export falls. So in many Caribbean countries you have a tremendous foreign debt and a crumbling infrastructure. You go in the hospitals, sometimes there are no sheets on the beds, you hardly have prescription pads to write the prescriptions. It is absolutely deplorable.

A number of Caribbean countries are even smaller than Trinidad. What about them?

Let me give you an example. The country of St. Kitts and Nevis has about 45,000 people. It is a fully independent country within the British Commonwealth. Now, imagine the Redskins playing in RFK stadium[9] on any given Sunday, and all the people in the stadium are more than the entire nation of St. Kitts!

Yet this nation has a prime minister, a cabinet, an embassy in America, an ambassador to the United Nations. It has its own flag, its own national anthem, its own everything. Now, all of this is very expensive. To maintain an embassy, for example, you have to pay the ambassador his salary, he has to entertain, he has to travel.

St. Kitts's economy is based on sugar, and it has a little bit of tourism, a casino. The country has probably 20,000 taxpayers or less.



A worker sews clothing in a U.S.-owned factory in St. Kitts.

How are you going to run a country on that?

When I was in St. Kitts a while ago, I spoke to some young people. I asked one, "What are you going to do? You're bright, you have finished high school; what does the future hold for you?" She said, "Well, a lot of us think about migrating." She had a job at the airport, but for every lucky person with a good job, there are 15 others with no job. And so in many instances migration is the only option.

Do you see any solutions?

The solution as far as I'm concerned would be a federation, a joining together of the countries in the region. There's no doubt about that in my mind. It's the only way a small country can become big.

But this has been very difficult to achieve in the Caribbean. Colonialism left us a legacy of separatism. Britain sent colonial governors out to administer each island as a separate colony; the same thing with France. When Britain got rid of its colonies, each one went off in a separate direction.

The federation that was tried in the 1950s did not last. Although the territories are so close together—half an hour by air sometimes—each has its individual personality. Each developed its own political strategy, and there were all sorts of petty rivalries. Individual island leaders did not want to give up their power. So the 1959 federation broke up quickly.

Now we have CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, which is basically for economic cooperation. People talk about trying again with a political federation, but I don't see it happening for the next 40 to 50 years.

A real federation would mean a common economic structure, a common external defense. You would have free trade, you would avoid tariffs and import duties. You could have one set of laws instead of separate laws for each country. You could have one capital and one set of ministries, with sub-offices in each island to handle local affairs. You would have one embassy in each foreign country.

I think this is the only way the English-speaking Caribbean can begin to have a voice in world affairs. With a federation, the outside world would be dealing with a larger force, instead of wheeling and dealing with lots of little countries. Even together, all the English-speaking territories still have only about 5 million people—why, Haiti alone has that many. So in terms of sheer numbers we're not talking very many people here. All the more reason why we should get together.

Interview with Keith Warner by Catherine A. Sunshine, Washington, DC, January 18, 1991. Keith Warner is chairman of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at George Mason University.

Vocabulary

royalist: loyal to the king or queen

RFK stadium: large stadium in Washington, DC

READING

Conditions Critical

BY LILLIAN ALLEN

Dem mash it up down inna Jamaica
Dem a add it up down inna Jamaica
Gas prices bounce in hoops for the sky
a little spark and the embers of oppression rise
People tek to the streets. It's *no negotiating stance*
When do you want freedom. *Yesterday*
And how do you propose you'll get it? *By the people's way*
So, that's why, dem a mash it up down inna Jamaica
Dem a add it up inna Jamaica

Dem say dem tired of trying to buy the country back
from the Americans and the IMF[0] pack
A little friendly debt with an open end
and it feels like the ball and chain game again
Conditions critical
Freedom has been mythical
Every few years a new deliverer come
Say: *Better must come, let me lead the way my people*
Seems better get delayed and somewhere hiding
It's quarter to twelve and it's getting late
Better change to waiting and we waiting here a while
and the weight is piling on our backs
And we sweating and dying under disparity's
attacks ... attacks
And our children still bawling. And our ancestors
still calling
And we right ya[0] so demanding.

Reprinted from: Ramabai Espinet, ed., *Creation Fire: A CAFRA Anthology of Caribbean Women's Poetry* (Sister Vision, 1990).

Vocabulary

IMF: International Monetary Fund

right ya: right here

READING

Proclamation

BY ABDUL MALIK

Dedicated to the First Official Observance of Emancipation Day in Trinidad and Tobago, 1st August 1985, and to Greater West Indian Unity and Purpose.

Is it too late
Too late
Can we disperse the gathering
Halt the oncoming
Cancel chaos
Undo ourselves

Is it too late
Too late
Can we transcend our times
Quiet our worst fears
Cease to be
Our own worst enemies

Is it too late
Too late
Can we recycle our dreams
Can we recast the mold
Can we transform
Our coming day

Is it too late
Too late
Can we redeem ourselves
Rend our own horizons
Root the common sea
Fashion our own freedom
Sense our common day
Become the oncoming

It is too late
Too late
Can we discard our doubts
Can we recover our faith
Delve deeper
Forge the common will
Delve deeper
Dispel the common gloom
Delve deeper
Attain the answers
Delve deeper
Deliver final judgement
Delve deeper
Emancipate a nation

Is it too late
Too late
Can we discover
Honor
In ourselves
Can we become
That day oncoming

–Reprinted from: Anne Walmsley and Nick Caistor, eds., *Facing the Sea: A new anthology from the Caribbean region* (Heinemann, 1986).

READING

You Are Involved

BY MARTIN CARTER

This I have learnt:
today a speck
tomorrow a hero
hero or monster
you are consumed!

Like a jig[0]
shakes the loom.
Like a web
is spun the pattern
all are involved!
all are consumed!

–Reprinted from: Martin Carter, *Poems of Resistance from Guyana* (Georgetown: Release Publishers, 1979. First published 1954.)

Vocabulary

jig: device for holding a piece of work in place

Artist: Rini Templeton

READING

Cahier d'un retour au pays natal

PAR AIMÉ CÉSAIRE

Et nous sommes debout maintenant, mon pays et moi, les
cheveux dans le vent, ma main petite maintenant dans son poing énorme et la force n'est pas en nous, mais au-dessus de nous, dans une voix qui vrille la nuit et l'audience comme la pénétrance d'une guêpe apocalyptique. Et la voix prononce que l'Europe nous a pendant des siècles gavés de mensonges et gonflés de pestilences,

car il n'est point vrai que l'oeuvre de l'homme est finie
que nous n'avons rien à faire au monde
que nous parasitons le monde
qu'il suffit que nous nous mettions au pas du monde
mais l'oeuvre de l'homme vient seulement de commencer

et il reste à l'homme à conquérir tout interdiction immobilisée aux coins de sa ferveur et aucune race ne possède le monopole de la beauté, de l'intelligence, de la force
et il est place pour tous au rendez-vous de la conquête et nous savons maintenant que le soleil tourne autour de notre terre éclairant la parcelle qu'a fixée notre volonté seule et que toute étoile chute de ciel en terre à notre commandement sans limite.

READING

Notebook of a Return to My Native Land

BY AIMÉ CÉSAIRE

And here we are now on our feet, my country and I, hair flying in the wind, my small hand clasped in its massive fist

And the strength is not in us but above and beyond us, in a voice which pierces the night and hearing like the drone of a great wasp. And the voice proclaims that for centuries Europe has crammed us with lies and bloated us with plague

for it is simply not true that the work of man is done
that we have nothing to contribute to the world
that we are parasites
that we must put ourselves at the world's feet
now we know, in truth, that man's work has only just begun
and that man must still conquer the inhibitions in his spirit
and that no race has a monopoly on beauty, on intelligence, on strength

and everyone has a part to play in the conquest
and we know now that the sun turns around our earth, shining on the little plot we have willed for ourselves, and that we can bring each star tumbling from heaven to earth at our limitless command.

–Excerpted from: Aimé Césaire, *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (Présence Africaine, 1956. First published 1939.) English translation by C. Sunshine.

Further Reading on Caribbean History

[Note: Addresses for publishers and distributors follow this section.]

▶ GENERAL HISTORIES

• Peter Ashdown, *Caribbean History in Maps* (Longman, 1979). Visual treatment of Caribbean history using over 175 maps and diagrams.

• William Claypole and John Robottom, *Caribbean Story* (Longman, 1980). Two-volume illustrated history of the region for secondary students and undergraduates. Comprehensive and detailed.

• Lennox Honychurch, *The Caribbean People* (Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1979). Three-volume illustrated history of the region for middle school students. Strong on the multicultural (African, Asian, European and Native American) origins of Caribbean people.

• Eric Williams, *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean 1492-1969* (Harper and Row, 1970). Detailed economic history of the region, for advanced students and teacher background.

▶ ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

• Tom Barry, Beth Wood and Deb Preusch, *The Other Side of Paradise: Foreign Control in the Caribbean* (Grove Press, 1984). Regional overview focusing on foreign corporate control of Caribbean resources.

• Carmen Diana Deere, et al, *In the Shadows of the Sun: Caribbean Development Alternatives and U.S. Policy* (A PACCA book published by Westview Press, 1990). Critical examination of the Caribbean's development prospects and relations with the United States. *The Caribbean: Alternative Visions* is an 8-page tabloid summarizing the book's content. Both available from Central American Resource Center, P.O. Box 2327, Austin, TX 78768. (512) 476-9841.

• Pat Ellis, ed., *Women of the Caribbean* (Zed Press, 1987). Essays on women and work, the family, education, culture and development.

• James Ferguson, *Far From Paradise: An Introduction to Caribbean Development* (Latin America Bureau, 1990). Capsule history of the Caribbean in a popular illustrated format. Available from Monthly Review Press.

• Catherine A. Sunshine, *The Caribbean: Survival, Struggle and Sovereignty* (EPICA/South End Press, 1988). Comprehensive introduction to the history, culture and politics of the contemporary Caribbean and U.S. policies toward the region. Illustrated. Available from EPICA.

• Clive Y. Thomas, *The Poor and the Powerless: Economic Policy and Change in the Caribbean* (Monthly Review Press, 1988). Comparative

survey of development policies, with case studies of Jamaica, Grenada, Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad and Puerto Rico.

▶ ON CULTURE

• Sidney W. Mintz and Sally Price, eds., *Caribbean Contours* (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1985). Anthology of essays on race, politics, language and music.

• Ian Isidore Smart, *Nicolás Guillén: Popular Poet of the Caribbean* (Univ. of Missouri Press, 1990).

• Keith Warner, *Kaiso! The Trinidad Calypso: A Study of the Calypso as Oral Literature* (Three Continents Press, 1982). Lively look at calypso's evolution and role in Caribbean society.

▶ NOVELS

[Note: Many of these titles have been issued in various editions by different publishers. Most can be obtained from Heinemann, Longman or Three Continents Press.)

- Michael Anthony, *The Year in San Fernando* (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Ralph de Boissiere, *Crown Jewel* (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Juan Bosch, *Cuentos Escritos en el Exilio* (Dominican Republic)
- Merle Collins, *Angel* (Grenada)
- Herbert De Lisser, *Jane's Career* (Jamaica)
- Zee Edgell, *Beka Lamb* (Belize)
- Beryl Gilroy, *Frangipani House* (Guyana)
- Merle Hodge, *Crick Crack, Monkey* (Trinidad & Tobago)
- C.L.R. James, *Minty Alley* (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Jamaica Kincaid, *Annie John* (Antigua & Barbuda)
- George Lamming, *In the Castle of My Skin* (Barbados)
- Earl Lovelace, *The Dragon Can't Dance* (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Roger Mais, *The Hills Were Joyful Together* (Jamaica)
- Claude McKay, *Banana Bottom* (Jamaica)
- Edgar Mittelholzer, *A Morning at the Office* (Guyana)
- V.S. Naipaul, *A House for Mr. Biswas* (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Victor S. Reid, *New Day* (Jamaica)
- Jacques Roumain, *Masters of the Dew* (Haiti)
- Simone Schwarz-Bart, *The Bridge of Beyond* (Guadeloupe)
- Samuel Selvon, *A Brighter Sun* (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Michael Thelwell, *The Harder They Come* (Jamaica)
- Joseph Zobel, *Black Shack Alley* (Martinique)

▶ FICTION ANTHOLOGIES

- Barbara Howes, ed., *From the Green Antilles* (Macmillan, 1966).
- Pamela Mordecai and Betty Wilson, eds., *Her True-True Name: An Anthology of Women's Writing from the Caribbean* (Heinemann, 1989).
- Kenneth Ramchand, ed., *Best West Indian Stories* (Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1982).
- Kal Wagenheim, ed., *Cuentos: An Anthology of Short Stories from Puerto Rico* (Schocken Books, 1978). Bilingual Spanish/English text.
- Anne Walmsley and Nick Caistor, eds., *Facing the Sea: A New Anthology from the Caribbean Region for Secondary Schools* (Heinemann, 1986). Includes teacher notes and discussion questions.

▶ POETRY

- Louise Bennett, *Jamaica Labrish* (Sangster's Book Stores, 1966).
- Edward Brathwaite, *The Arrivants: A New World Trilogy* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1973). Includes *Rights of Passage* (1967), *Masks* (1968), and *Islands* (1969).
- Paula Burnett, ed., *The Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse in English* (Penguin Books, 1986).
- Martin Carter, *Poems of Resistance* (London, 1954).
- Ramabai Espinet, ed., *Creation Fire: A CAFRA Anthology of Caribbean Women's Poetry* (Sister Vision, 1990).
- Grace Nichols, *i is a long-memoried woman* (Karnak House, 1983).
- Andrew Salkey, ed., *Breaklight: The Poetry of the Caribbean* (Doubleday Anchor, 1973).
- Derek Walcott, *Selected Poetry* (Heinemann, 1981).

▶ PLAYS

- Trevor Rhone, *Old Story Time and Other Plays* (Longman, 1981).
- Derek Walcott, *Dream on Monkey Mountain and Other Plays* (Jonathan Cape, 1972).

Sources of Classroom Materials

▶ PUBLISHERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

- Africa World Press, 15 Industry Court, Trenton, NJ 08638. (609) 771-1666.
- Calaloux Publications, P.O. Box 82-725, Wellesley, MA 02181. (617) 237-2230.
- Caribbean Books, Box H, Parkersburg, IA 50665. (319) 346-2048.
- Heinemann, 70 Court St., Portsmouth, NH 03801. (603) 431-7894.
- Longman Group Ltd., Longman House, Burnt Mill, Harlow, Essex, CM20 2JE, England. Telephone: (0279) 26721.
- Monthly Review Press, 122 W. 27 St., New York, NY 10001. (212) 691-2555. (Also distributes books published by the Latin America Bureau in London.)
- Sister Vision: Black Women and Women of Colour Press, P.O. Box 217, Station E, Toronto, Ontario M6H 4E2, Canada. (416) 533-2184.
- South End Press, 116 St. Botolph St., Boston, MA 02115. (617) 266-0629.
- Thomas Nelson & Sons. Ltd., Nelson House, Mayfield Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5PL, England. Telephone: (0932) 246133.
- Three Continents Press, 1901 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20006. (202) 223-2554.
- Zed Books, 171 First Avenue, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 00716.

▶ FILMS

- Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.
- New Yorker Films, 16 West 61 St., New York, NY 10023.
- New Day Films, 853 Broadway #1210, New York, NY 10003.

▶ ORGANIZATIONS

- Caribbean Exchange
  P.O. Box 146816
  San Francisco, CA 94114-6816
- Center for Cuban Studies
  124 West 23rd St.
  New York, NY 10011

• Center for Puerto Rican Studies
Hunter College, CUNY
695 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10021

• Centre for Caribbean Dialogue
229 College St. #302
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4
Canada

• Development Group for Alternative Policies
1400 I St., N.W., Suite 520
Washington, DC 20005

• Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean (EPICA)
1470 Irving St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20010

• Oxfam America
115 Broadway
Boston, MA 02116

• Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America (PACCA)
1506 19th St., N.W., Suite 2
Washington, DC 20036

• The Resource Center
Box 4506
Albuquerque, NM 87196

• Washington Office on Haiti
110 Maryland Ave., N.E., Rm. 310
Washington, DC 20002

About the Publishers

Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean (EPICA)

Founded in 1968, EPICA educates the U.S. public about the roots of contemporary problems in the Caribbean and Central America. An independent organization working alongside the institutional church, EPICA advocates a joint strategy of change by people in the North and South. Through grassroots public education, EPICA serves diverse North American constituencies working toward a new relationship with the people of the hemisphere. *Programs include:*

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- Study tours to the Caribbean and Central America for church and community groups. Groups have visited Haiti, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, as well as Central American nations.
- *Challenge*, a journal of faith writings by Central Americans.
- Information center and library open to the public.

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Founded in 1986, NECA includes 11 affiliates across the country. Its goals are to inform teachers and students about Central America and to support efforts for peace, human rights and a negotiated settlement to conflict in the region. To do this, NECA provides teaching resources on the history and current realities of Central America, especially as these relate to the lives of refugee students in U.S. classrooms. *Programs include:*

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- The "Books Project," a writing project for Spanish-speaking children in Washington, DC elementary schools. Students write and illustrate short stories which are sent to schools in El Salvador.
- Bimonthly newsletter, *Central America in the Classroom.*

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Other Titles of Interest

____ THE CARIBBEAN: SURVIVAL, STRUGGLE AND SOVEREIGNTY. By Catherine A. Sunshine (EPICA, 1988). Illustrated introduction to the region's history, culture and politics. Senior high and above. $17.50 postpaid.

____ INSIDE THE VOLCANO: A CURRICULUM ON NICARAGUA. Edited by Bill Bigelow and Jeff Edmundson (NECA, 1990). Stories, poems and interviews portray the lives of Nicaraguans for secondary school students. $15.00 postpaid.

____ WILFREDO: THE STORY OF A BOY FROM EL SALVADOR. (NECA, 1986). Wilfredo tells about his life in El Salvador and his move to the United States. In English and Spanish, large print, illustrated. Elementary and ESL. $12.00 postpaid.

____ OF SECRET WARS AND ROSES. By Dinorah Sandoval (NECA, 1987). Story of a Salvadoran refugee in a U.S. high school. In English and Spanish. Secondary schools. $12.00 postpaid.

____ MASAYA MARKET. Colorful 18" x 24" poster by Nicaraguan artist Pablo Beteta. $12.50 postpaid.

____ CENTRAL AMERICA IN THE CLASSROOM. Quarterly publication of the Network of Educators on Central America. Reviews, suggested classroom activities, and news. $15/year.

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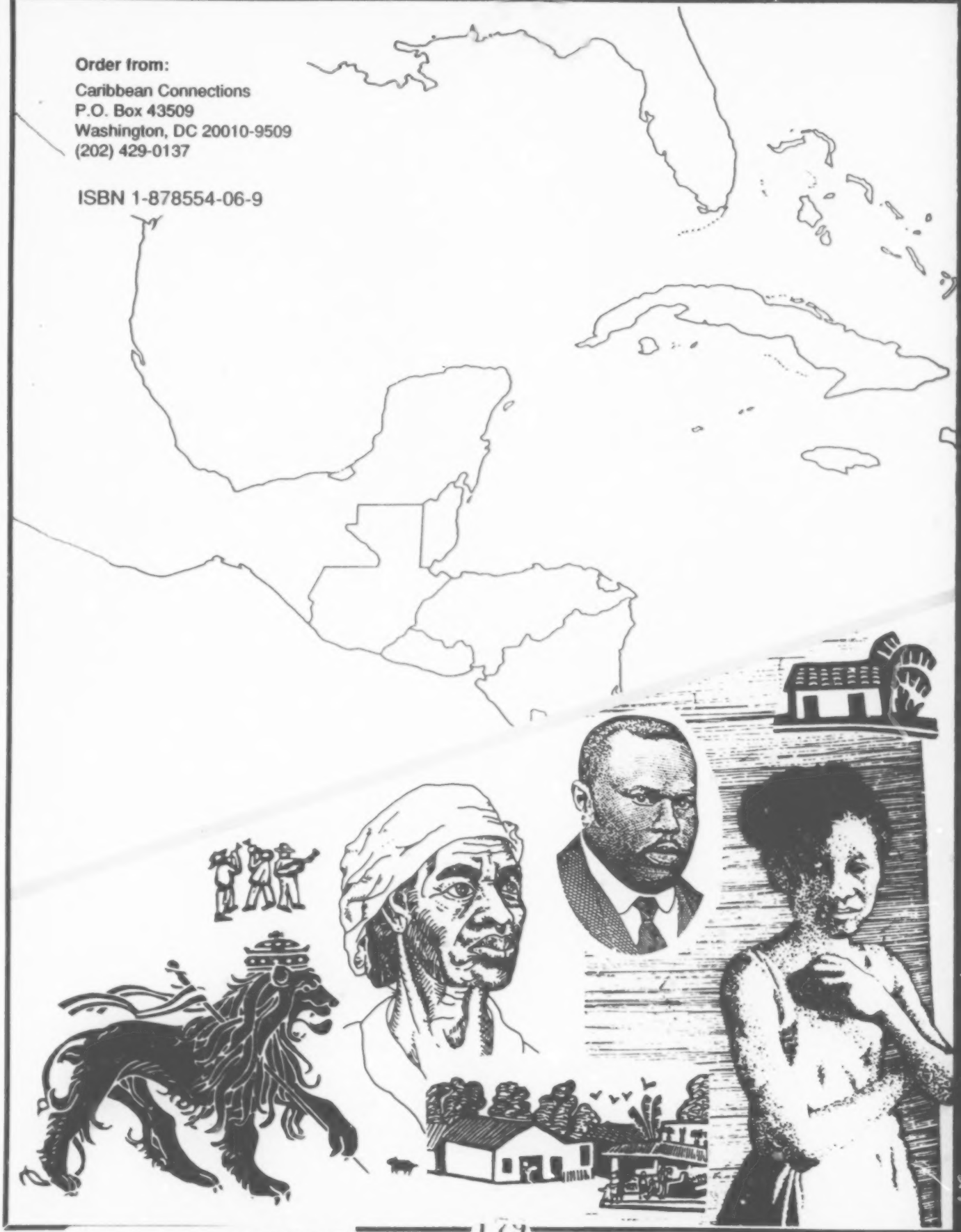

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